







THE  
POLITICAL LIFE  
OF  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
**GEORGE CANNING,**  
FROM  
HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE SEALS OF THE FOREIGN  
DEPARTMENT, IN SEPTEMBER, 1822,  
TO  
THE PERIOD OF HIS DEATH, IN AUGUST, 1827.  
TOGETHER WITH  
A SHORT REVIEW OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SUBSEQUENTLY TO THAT EVENT.

BY  
HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY,  
**AUGUSTUS GRANVILLE STAPLETON, Esq.**

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SECOND EDITION,  
INCLUDING THE PART OMITTED IN THE FIRST.

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CONTENTS  
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CHAP. XIII.

Domestick Affairs.—Relaxation of Commercial Restrictions.  
— The Panick, and its Causes.—Measures of the Government at the Meeting of Parliament.—Proposed Issue of Exchequer Bills.—Mr. Ellice's Motion on the Silk Trade.—Corn Bill.—Commercial Intercourse between the British West Indies and the United States.—Correspondence between Mr. Canning and Mr. Gallatin.

Page 1

CHAP. XIV.

Slave Trade.—Slavery.—North-West Coast of America.

84

CHAP. XV.

Western Europe.—State of Spain.—Diplomatick Transactions with the Court of Madrid.—Cuba.—Change of Ministry.—Sir Charles Stuart's Proceedings at Rio de Janeiro.—Death of the King of Portugal.—Grant of a Constitutional Charter by Don Pedro.—Its Reception in Portugal, and in Europe.—Invasion of Portugal from Spain.—British Troops sent to Portugal.—Mr. Canning's Speech on that Occasion, and its Effects.—Condition of Portugal at Mr. Canning's Death.

127

## CHAP. XVI.

**Greek Affairs.** — Measures respecting the Greek Protocol. — Correspondence with Prince Lieven. — Instructions to Mr. Stratford Canning. — Communications with France, Austria, and Prussia. — Rejection by the Porte of Mr. Stratford Canning's Overture. — Success of the Turks in Greece. — Greek Treaty and Secret Article. — Instructions to the Ambassadors at Constantinople, and to the Commanders of the Allied Squadrons in the Levant. — Mr. Canning's "System" of Policy. Page 252

## CHAP. XVII.

**Death of the Duke of York.** — Illness of Lord Liverpool. — Advice to the King on that Event. — Corn Laws and Catholick Question. — State of Parties after the Debates on these Questions. — Mr. Canning's Interview with the King. — Message to the Cabinet. — Mr. Canning empowered by the King to reconstruct the Administration.

299

## CHAP. XVIII.

**Negotiations respecting the new Administration.** — Resignations of the Duke of Wellington, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Bathurst, Lord Melville, Lord Bexley, and Mr. Peel. — Duke of Clarence nominated Lord High Admiral. — Negotiations with the Whigs. — Arrangement of the new Cabinet. — Irish Government. — 324

## CHAP. XIX.

**Debates in Parliament respecting the Formation of the new Administration.** — Explanations of Mr. Canning and Mr. Peel in the House of Commons. — Explanation of Lord Eldon. — Speech of the Duke of Wellington. — Mr. Canning's Letter in Answer to that Speech, and the Reply. — Explanations of the other Ex-Ministers. — 346

## CHAP. XX.

Debates on the new Administration in the House of Commons. — Debates on the same Subject in the House of Lords. — Speech of the Earl Grey. — The Budget. — Corn Bill. — Amendment of the Duke of Wellington. — — Abandonment of the Bill. — Debates respecting it in the House of Commons. — Mr. Canning's Illness, Death, and Funeral.	Page 388
---	----------

## CHAP. XXI.

Comparison of the Domestick Policy of the Duke of Wellington's Government with that of Mr. Canning. — Test Act. — Catholick Question. — Corn Laws. — Finance. — Comparison of the Foreign Policy of the Duke of Wellington's Government with that of Mr. Canning. — Turkey and Greece. — Portugal, and General System. — Collision between the two extreme Parties in Europe	453
--	-----



**ERRATA IN VOL. III.**

Page 403. line 2. from bottom, for "argument," read "arguments."  
410. delete the asterisk in line 5., and insert it after the word  
"end," in the line immediately before the Note.



# MR. CANNING'S

## POLITICAL LIFE, FROM, &c.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

DOMESTICK AFFAIRS. — RELAXATION OF COMMERCIAL RESTRICTIONS. — THE PANICK, AND ITS CAUSES. — MEASURES OF THE GOVERNMENT AT THE MEETING OF PARLIAMENT. — PROPOSED ISSUE OF EXCHEQUER BILLS. — MR. ELLICE'S MOTION ON THE SILK TRADE. — CORN BILL. — COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE BETWEEN THE BRITISII WEST INDIES AND THE UNITED STATES. — CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MR. CANNING AND MR. GALLATIN.

IN a preceding chapter it has been stated that, although at the close of the summer of 1825, the contentment and good humour with the Administration, which every where prevailed, made the juncture extremely favourable for the election of a new Parliament, yet Mr. Canning opposed a dissolution for reasons exclusively connected with the Catholick Question. At the time when he did this, he was well aware, that the state of things which produced this content-

ment ~~was~~ not likely to continue, for he, in ~~collusion~~ with some other observant members of the Cabinet, foresaw that ere many months had elapsed there would, in all probability, occur a financial and commercial crisis, which, by producing for a time general distress, would in the ordinary course of things excite a clamour against the Government. Such a clamour, too, he well knew would be directed chiefly against the liberal part of the Administration, by whom the relaxations of the restrictions of our commercial system had been introduced, and by whose firmness they had been carried, in spite of the opposition of a powerful party, who looked upon such innovations with distrust and apprehension.

These considerations, however, to a minister who looked ~~not~~ to temporary advantage, but to the attainment of lasting good, were not sufficient to outweigh the injury which the vitally important question of Catholick Emancipation might have sustained from an immediate dissolution; and the appeal to the Country was accordingly postponed for another session. In the course of the November following the crisis, which had been expected, arrived: and a panick, such as never had been witnessed since the fatal South Sea Bubble, shook all commercial credit to its foundations. But before entering upon the history of this calamitous event, the attention of the reader must be drawn to the

alterations which, with Mr. Canning's sanction and support, had been introduced into our commercial system.

To the merit of originating these alterations, or of adapting them to practice, Mr. Canning laid no claim. They were unconnected for the most part with the business of the department over which he presided, and they related to a branch of politicks, the study of which was of all perhaps the least suited to his taste. Nevertheless they were far too important in their nature and consequences for Mr. Canning to have left them wholly to the management of others; and high as was his opinion of Mr. Huskisson's judgment and knowledge in commercial and financial matters, yet he gave not his approbation to the system of that minister, until, by a careful examination of the principles on which it was founded, he had satisfied himself of their truth; nor did he give his support to the measures themselves until he had ascertained, not only that they were in conformity with the general principles which he had approved, but were likewise so qualified, as to be well fitted to the peculiar nature of the case to which they might be intended to apply.

Thus Mr. Canning was perfectly convinced of the truth of the abstract principle, that commerce is sure to flourish most, when wholly unfettered by restrictions; but since such had not

been the opinions, either of our ancestors or of surrounding nations, and since, in consequence, restraints had been imposed upon all commercial transactions, a state of things had grown up, to which the unguarded application of the abstract principle, however true it was in theory, might have been somewhat mischievous in practice. The opposite course, however, of entirely disregarding this principle in commercial legislation, would certainly not have been less mischievous in its ultimate results ; and Mr. Canning felt that it was the part of sound policy never, indeed, to lose sight of the principle, but, at the same time, never to forget, that, from the circumstance of its having been previously lost sight of, there existed an absolute necessity for applying it with discretion, and care.

Such were Mr. Canning's views of the best mode of treating commercial affairs. With respect to them, as well as with respect to political concerns in general, his first desire was in every case to assure himself of philosophical truth, and to ascertain the springs of action inherent in nature. These, he knew, must always be pressing with a strong force in one direction, and would thereby tend to counteract the efforts of those, who, unconscious of the existence of such an opposing power, urge on their schemes in a different, and unnatural direction.

It is not here proposed to enter into a minute examination of the various changes which were made in our commercial laws during the time that Mr. Canning was in office ; but since he declared in Parliament, that he considered himself accountable for them, it would be leaving incomplete the history of this part of his life, if no outline were given of the measures, for the recommendation of which he did not hesitate to proclaim that he was ready to take his full share of the responsibility.

It has been already stated, that the principle upon which all our laws relating to Commerce were founded, was that of interference, either by restriction on the one hand, or encouragement on the other. Trade was not left to itself to find its own channels, but it was to be forced by a vain meddling legislation into those channels, into which it would not of its own accord have flowed : all laws on this subject were made with reference to parts alone, the Government never legislating for the country, as a whole. Thus the importation of some goods were prohibited lest they should interfere with the internal consumption of some favoured manufactures, and bounties were given to induce the production, and exportation of others. Ships of foreign nations were not allowed to carry certain specified articles, and every enactment was unblushingly made under the assumption that we

could not benefit ourselves, except at the expense of our neighbours.

Up to the commencement of the late war, and through that war, with only such modifications as a state of hostilities occasionally required, this system was persevered in; and its full revival, and strict continuance seemed to be contemplated as the natural consequence of the return of peace. It had till then no doubt been productive of great advantage to our Navigation, especially in its earlier stages; for strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that the principles of commercial intercourse were then so little understood, that surrounding nations viewed our Navigation laws, if not without jealousy, at least without having recourse to retaliation. After the close of the American War, the altered position of the Countries which we had founded—then uniting and for the first time assuming the character of an independent nation—made some alterations in our Navigation Laws indispensable to the existence of any commercial intercourse between Great Britain, and the United States: these alterations were made; but, notwithstanding, laws were then passed by that infant Nation highly injurious to our commerce. Still these laws were not framed with the wise object of compelling Great Britain to abandon, as far as regarded the United States, her system of com-

merce and navigation, but originated rather in those feelings of deeply rooted hatred towards this Country, which the remembrance of past oppression, and recent strife, had then engendered in the bosoms of our trans-Atlantick brethren.

To counteract these proceedings, on the part of the United States it appears that various plans were suggested, and considered by the Governments of the day; but they one and all were abandoned, and the Revolutionary War broke out in 1798 without any material change having been made in our commercial system. The peculiar features which characterized that war, of near a quarter of a century's duration, enabled us during that long period to maintain that system. The anti-commercial edicts of Napoleon, and the insecurity with which all trading ships traversed the Seas, unless under the safeguard of the British Navy, or American flag, caused the disappearance from the Ocean of all mercantile ships, with the exception of those of Great Britain, and the United States. So that from the force of circumstances, wholly unconnected with our laws, We, and our former Colony, monopolized the navigation of the World.

When peace was restored in 1815, the preservation of this monopoly for any length of time became impossible. Sounder principles of commerce very generally prevailed; and other

nations being no longer content to witness with tame indifference our exclusive system, began to counteract this selfishness on our parts by retaliation on theirs.

The example was first set by the United States, which after the peace again laid restraints on British commerce; not, however, as before, with the hope of injuring our prosperity, but on the fair and wise ground of not granting facilities to us, which we refused to them. When this plan was adopted by the United States there were only three courses open to the Government: 1. The adoption of a system of reciprocity; 2. Maintaining the old system of restraint; 3. The imposition of additional restrictions. With respect to the last, it certainly would have been most unwise to have entered into a contest, which, if mutually persevered in, must have ended in the annihilation of the trade of both parties. And with respect to the last but one, it is obvious that that one of the two countries would have suffered the most, which had the largest commercial marine; and, that as ours was the largest, we should have been the greatest sufferers.

Our Government, therefore, judiciously resolved to adopt the only remaining alternative, and accordingly considerable alterations were made in our Navigation Laws in favour of the United States in their direct trade with this

country. In the course of a few years the other Powers of Europe began to follow the example which had thus been set them. The effect of their so doing we had evidently begun to feel before the year 1821; for in that year, we find Mr. Wallace \*, who was then Vice-President of the Board of Trade, introducing into the House of Commons a new Navigation Act, and marking his strong sense of our altered position by the following very just observations:— “We are now,” he said, “in a situation extremely different from that in which we were placed some years ago. We have not now the undivided empire of the sea, we cannot now command the navigation of the ocean, we must therefore be content to proceed on a fair system of competition, and to carry on our dealings under strict commercial rules.”

In conformity with these sentiments, Mr. Wallace not only introduced this new Navigation Act, but likewise that same session brought forward another, called the Warehousing Act, which, however, did not pass the legislature till the following Session. Mr. Robinson (who was President of the same Board) also brought in two acts changing the regulations of our colonial intercourse; which acts were by no means inferior in importance to the two first mentioned.

The old Navigation Law, although made solely for the benefit of British shipping, as a whole, subjected individual ships to many inconvenient restrictions. The great objects of it were, first, to forbid the importation of the production of the three distant continents, except from the particular one of which they were the production : — secondly, to prevent any one European State from becoming the general carrier of European goods. These two objects were not lost sight of in the new law, the chief alterations effected by which consisted ; first, in permitting the goods of Asia, Africa, or America, which before could only come from that particular quarter of the world where they were produced, to be imported indifferently from either of the three quarters ; and next, in permitting certain European goods, commonly denominated “ the “ enumerated articles,” which before could only be imported in British ships, or in ships of the country of their production, (and some of which were altogether prohibited, if exported from Germany or the Netherlands,) to be imported from any place either in a British ship, or in a ship of the country of their production, or in a ship of the country from whence the exportation was made.

Thus the new law left to the ordinary course of things to effect the two chief purposes which the old sought to accomplish by positive enact-

ment. For the expense of double voyages will prevent the goods of Asia, Africa, or America being carried from one to the other in any considerable quantities, prior to their being brought to this country ; and the like expense will prevent the formation of intermediate depôts of the bulky goods of Europe upon an extensive scale. Still, however, when, among the various transactions of the commercial world, such previous removal of goods have incidentally occurred, the power to bring them on will be more serviceable to the shipping interest than would be the restraint. The new Act, indeed, while it is more simple, and less restrictive to all shipping than the old, is, at the same time, more calculated to encourage British ships, than to open new channels of trade to foreign ones.

The new Act, it should be remembered, did not interfere with the Revenue, for it left all the discriminating duties on goods in foreign ships in full force.

The most material change in point of principle made by the Warehousing Act was that it permitted manufactured, as well as unmanufactured goods, to be deposited in this country, waiting a market here and abroad : it also permitted even prohibited goods of all sorts to be warehoused for exportation. This proposition to extend the system met with considerable opposition from the manufacturing interests, who were apprehen-

sive that we should lose our command of foreign markets for our own goods, if the exporting merchants were enabled to make shipments of foreign manufactures from this country. The delay occasioned by this opposition prevented the Act from passing in the Session of 1822, but it was passed in the next Session, under the auspices of its author, Mr. Wallace. Provisions, shackling the transit trade, in some cases removed a part of the objections; and the rest were dissipated by the opinion, which has since acquired still greater force, that the opportunity of selection from a copious assortment of goods for foreign adventure would tend to introduce into the general markets of the world more of our own goods than would be excluded by the occasional rivalry of particular articles.

The Act is framed with great consideration for the trade and a perfect knowledge of its wants, at the same time that it secures the safety of the revenue by confining the higher advantages of the system to well situated warehouses of superior structure and arrangement.

Of Mr. Robinson's two Acts, the first related to the trade of our American possessions with other places in America: the second related to their trade with other parts of the world. Both these Acts permitted the importation from foreign countries of certain goods, which before had only been allowed to be imported from this

country, and consequently only in British ships ; and further, the productions of America were allowed to be imported into the colonies direct from that continent not only in British but in foreign ships. The goods thus favoured were either articles of first necessity, or else were not such as are the productions of the United Kingdom. They were made subject to a moderate duty.

Notwithstanding the very extensive character of these two Acts, the only material operation of them was to open afresh the intercourse between our West Indian plantations, and the United States of America. Upon the return of peace the British Government had so far recurred to the old-established colonial system, as to require that all importation should be made in British ships. The Americans insisted upon the admission of their ships ; and accordingly till that point should be conceded, they would not permit British ships to take on board in their ports cargoes for our West Indian Colonies. The United States were the chief source from whence these Colonies derived their lumber and provisions — articles which are of first necessity to sugar plantations, and which are at the same time the staple exports of the North American States. This regulation therefore was not carried into effect by the United States without considerable injury accruing to themselves ; but the West Indies in their turn

were reduced to a state of great privation : the controversy therefore turned upon the question, whether we should first be starved into compliance, or they first be tired of the loss of a profitable trade. The victory was theirs, we yielded, and the Act of 1822 admitted their ships with their lumber and provisions upon the same terms with our own, both as to the ships, and as to the goods in the ships. Thus when the British Government yielded the point, it was done handsomely, in the full expectation that these advances towards cordiality would be fairly met by their antagonists, and that the supply of the West Indies with American lumber and provisions would be uninterruptedly effected in future by the joint efforts of British and American ships. In the ports of importation the ships of either party were admitted with their cargoes on the same terms. Nothing was wanting but that in the ports of exportation they should both be allowed likewise to depart on the same terms. The American Government, however, decreed differently, and would not allow the departure from their ports of British ships upon equal terms with their own ; and even in some cases the permission to export goods for the British colonies was refused to British ships. For, in the first place, they laid a duty of a dollar a ton upon all British ships clearing with cargoes for these Colonies ; and, in the next place, no British ships

were allowed to load such cargoes at all, unless they had come last from the Colonies. It was supposed that the West India ship sailing from hence in ballast might sometimes take an American port in her way, and carry a cargo of Lumber to her place of destination. The object of the prohibition was to prevent the possibility of such an incidental advantage. Other pretensions were also set up by that Government, with a view so to embarrass the trade whenever it was attempted to be carried on in British ships as might be expected to insure the monopoly of it to its own. The British Government retaliated without delay the tonnage duty, but it could apply no direct retaliation to the other impediments created by the ungracious conduct of the United States. In this position, therefore, the question remained for some time after the Act of 1822 had come into operation.

In the course of the same year in which these acts were passed, another act on a similar subject, but of an opposite tendency, received the sanction of the legislature. Its object was to impose still further restrictions upon the importation of corn, than those which had been imposed by the Act of 1815. Absolute prohibition until corn reached a certain point, to be succeeded by unlimited importation, was the principle on which that Act was founded. The new Act lowered the point at which unlimited importation was

allowed, and in exchange had recourse to the additional agency of a scale of duty.

Such were the new laws affecting our trade, which were proposed by the Government during the Session of 1822; the one immediately preceding the junction with the Cabinet of Mr. Canning: Mr. Huskisson did not take his seat in the Cabinet till the middle of the Session of 1823.

The ice therefore may be said to have been broken before those events, but still there was a great deal wanting to give full effect to the operations of the new laws: for it was not sufficient merely to permit that which was before wholly forbidden, unless those regulations, which would operate as prohibitions, were likewise.

Mr. Wallace's Navigation Law indeed was geographical, not fiscal, and the repeal, or diminution of the discriminating duties on goods imported in foreign ships, did not form any part of its provisions.

Mr. Huskisson felt therefore, when he came to the Board of Trade, that although much had been done, yet more remained to do, and he proceeded fearlessly, yet at the same time most cautiously, in relaxing those restrictions on our commerce, which if preserved were calculated to render almost nugatory the concessions already made.

Accordingly during the Sessions of 1823, 1824, and 1825, different Acts were introduced

by Mr. Huskisson for doing away with the discriminating duties; but in order that foreign nations might not impose new, or increase old discriminating duties, at the very moment when we were abandoning ours, a power was reserved to the King in Council to enforce the payment of additional duties upon the ships of all foreign countries, in the event of the treatment which British ships should meet with in their ports, not being reciprocal to that, which their ships were to meet with, in the Ports of the United Kingdom.

In 1826 a new rule of navigation, exclusively applicable to the Mediterranean, was established. Goods &c. productions of Asia and Africa, which should find their way to Ports in Europe within that Sea by internal routes, and not by the Atlantick Ocean, were made importable from those Ports in British Ships: thus erecting the Mediterranean and its surrounding shores, as it were, into a fifth quarter of the Globe.

Mr. Huskisson also revised and altered the list of "enumerated articles." When that list was first constructed it was intended to consist of commodities of extensive importation: in process of time some of the articles contained in the list had nearly ceased to be imported, while their places were supplied by other articles which were omitted. The list was therefore

reconstructed upon the principle of its original intention.

In 1825 the general consolidation of the Laws of the Customs was effected by Mr. Hume \*, under the favouring auspices of the Board of Trade and Treasury. The difficulty and vastness of this undertaking was only surpassed by its importance. From the reign of the first Edward up to the present times, these laws had accumulated to the enormous number of fifteen hundred : — frequently contradictory, and made without reference to each other, they were only understood by the initiated few, and required the devotion of a whole life to their study, at once to comprehend, and to obey them. They were unintelligible to the merchants, while they perplexed and harassed all their proceedings. This chaos of Legislation was compressed by Mr. Hume into Eleven Acts (a sort of Code Napoleon), with an order, a clearness, and a precision whereby even the least talented of our mercantile men are now enabled to consult the laws of the Customs with facility, and to take them with safety for their guide. These effects, upon which for their advantages to commerce Mr. Huskisson several times expatiated with exultation, would alone make this consolidation a most important era in our fiscal policy ; but advantage was likewise taken of the

\* James Deacon Hume, Esq., then of the Customs, now (1830) of the Board of Trade.

opportunity to introduce into the Laws themselves some memorable changes, in conformity with the spirit of those principles of commercial intercourse, on which the Government had determined to act. Not only were duties of importance considerably reduced, but those on numerous minor articles were lowered. During the war the rates of the Tariff had been so increased, for the single purpose of revenue, that they had become for the most part inapplicable to a state of peace, and required general revision. This revision was regulated by the following principles: — First, Those duties were reduced, the heaviness of which tended to lessen, rather than to increase their total product. Secondly, The duties on raw materials, and on various articles useful in manufactures, were lowered to little more than nominal sums. Thirdly, Protecting duties of extravagant amount were reduced to that point, at which the consumer was fairly entitled to relief, either by the increased industry of the home manufacture, or by access to other sources of supply. And, lastly, the comforts and the tastes of the publick, and the advantage of their retail suppliers, were consulted by the removal of duties which prevented the introduction, or most unnecessarily abridged, the use of many articles without benefit to any party whatever.

By the system founded on these principles, there has not only been distributed amongst a numerous population a great increase of employment, but its diffusion has been greater in proportion, than its increase. It is also very remarkable, that those trades which have been prominent in complaining of foreign competition have neither suffered more in diminution of profits, nor increased less in extent of business, than those which have been able to hold foreign competition at defiance.

Besides this consolidation of the Customs' Laws which took place in 1825, an Act was passed in the Session of that year, whereby many commercial advantages were conferred on the Colonies, beyond those contained in Mr. Robinson's two acts of 1822; Mr. Huskisson laying down as the fundamental principle on which his alterations were founded — a principle deduced from past experience with respect both to *Ireland and to our Colonies* — that “so far as the Colonies “themselves were concerned, their prosperity “was cramped and impeded by a system of “exclusion and monopoly; and that whatever “tended to increase the prosperity of the Colonies “could not fail, in the long run, to advance, in “an equal degree, the general interests of the “parent state.” By these Acts, not only articles of first necessity, but Goods of all descriptions, with very few exceptions, were allowed to be

imported from all Countries, either in British ships, or in ships of the Country of their production; and the goods of the Colonies were allowed to be exported in any ships to any foreign Country whatever. The only part of the Colonial system which was persevered in, was that which excludes foreign ships from carrying goods from one British place to another; "so that by this arrangement was preserved the foundation of our Navigation Laws—all intercourse between the mother-country and the Colonies, whether direct or circuitous, and all intercourse of the Colonies with each other, being considered as a coasting trade to be reserved entirely and absolutely for ourselves."

The admission of foreign ships, however, was not unconditional: it was made to depend upon reciprocal or equivalent liberality towards our trade and navigation on the part of the countries profiting by the advantages of it; but a power was given to the King in Council to relax the rigour of the Law, if occasion should, in any particular cases, seem to require it. By the same Act the privileges of warehousing were extended to the chief trading Ports of the Colonies; a measure, which was well adapted to promote the creation of entrepôts in those places, for the general barter trade of that quarter of the Globe.

Independently of all these measures of internal legislation, Treaties of Commerce, founded on

the principles of reciprocity, were negotiated with Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, the Hanse Towns, *three of the new States of Spanish America, and lastly with France.* In the case of Prussia, the Power with whom the first of these Treaties was made, it may be said, that it was fairly forced upon this country. It certainly was not the wish of our Government unnecessarily to stir the question. But “the Prussian Ship-owners were “all going to ruin,” and the Prussian Government very wisely resolved not to give to British ships, privileges which the British Government denied to Prussian ships. When once foreign Powers began to adopt that course, against which we could not justly remonstrate, it has been already shewn that the only safe and wise way was to meet it with concession. Prussia having therefore thus attained her object, to have manifested any unwillingness to treat other Powers on the same footing, would have been inconsistent with the principle of our navigation law, which, acting upon the principle “divide et impera,” was more anxious for an equal distribution of foreign shipping, than for its diminution.

To all these changes, little or no opposition was offered during their progress through the Legislature. The members who spoke upon the subject, for the most part expressed themselves in terms of high commendation. It was not till after the occurrence of the commercial crisis

mentioned in the beginning of this chapter that they met with the animadversion of the Members of Parliament. That crisis (as was unavoidable) produced almost universal embarrassment ; and as it so happened that the change in our commercial system had not long preceded the embarrassment, there were not wanting individuals to connect the two together, and to describe the one as the cause, and the other as the effect. It may, however, be safely asserted that they wholly failed in establishing this connection ; and the convulsion in our commercial transactions in December 1825, which has been known by the name of "*the panick*," must be ascribed to other causes than that of the liberal policy of the Administration ; which, far from producing, or even increasing the disaster, has been proved, as clearly as argument can prove it, to have tended not a little to its alleviation.

Without undertaking to enumerate all the various causes which contributed to bring about this derangement, it will be sufficient to state those in which it principally originated. In doing this it may be well to remind the reader that in 1812 Mr. Canning in two well-known speeches, professed his conviction of the truth of the doctrines put forth by the Bullion Committee ; nevertheless he was not prepared to go all the lengths which that Committee recommended. Accordingly we find that although

out of the sixteen resolutions proposed by its Chairman, he voted for the first fifteen, in which were *laid down what he conceived to be the true principles of our money system*; yet he voted against the last, which went to pledge the House of Commons to compel the Bank to resume its cash payments, in two years from the time of passing it. For this resumption, in the then existing state of affairs, he thought that the Bank would hardly be prepared; he therefore concurred with the government, that the period (six months after the signature of a treaty of peace) assigned by law for the removal of the restriction, ought not to be accelerated, at the same time that he denounced the principles and affirmations contained in the resolutions preceding this practical conclusion, as in the highest degree erroneous and objectionable.

The Government, however, were not content with simply reprobating the doctrines of the bullionists as dangerous in their unqualified application to the extraordinary state of the country at that particular time, but went the length of denying their abstract truth: — a point which is now no longer controverted. It is, nevertheless, very questionable whether the bullionists, in accounting for the high price of gold in bank paper, allowed sufficient weight to the fact of “the adverse circumstances of our trade,” mentioned in the thirteenth resolution proposed by

the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Horner. These “adverse circumstances” were such as had never before affected the trade of this Country. Trade was then not merely restrained by war, but was itself made the chief engine and medium of war, and France and England fought their battles through its sides. Napoleon issued his Berlin and Milan decrees, and the whole coast of Europe bristled with bayonets to prevent the introduction of goods from Great Britain. The British Government published its Orders in Council, and the British Navy covered the Seas to prevent those goods passing to the Continent by any other course. Under these most extraordinary impediments to exportation, importation was proceeding unrestrained; and we were drawing from the Continent not only supplies for the consumption of the People, including great quantities of coin, but also naval stores, and other articles necessary to the public service.

Under these circumstances it was that our merchants had to seek the means of paying for the goods which they imported. Had Napoleon’s decrees stood alone they might have succeeded in making that payment by sending circuitously their merchandize: but the Orders in Council gave an effect to these decrees, which by themselves they never would have produced, and rendered it impossible to convey goods to

the Continent. Thus the precious metals became the only medium of payment which our merchants possessed ; and hence in a great degree arose that excessive demand for gold, which for the sake of its superior utility as a remittance, and not for its superior value, enhanced its price : for at that time the home prices of all our exportable goods (whether home manufactures or tropical productions, of which we then possessed an enormous stock,) were greatly below their prices in the very Countries to which we were sending the gold. This is a fact which abundantly proves that the Continent did not take the gold in preference to our goods.

A constant drain of gold was thus kept up ; and such a drain as must shortly have exhausted its source, if depreciation to the amount supposed had really been the single cause : for such a cause would have been general ; and if all Individuals had been induced by their private interest to transmit gold, rather than goods, there could have been no renewal of the supply. But while gold was thus projected from us in one direction by an unnatural force, — that natural power, which works by the stimulus of private interest, and which is always referred to as the detector and exposur of depreciation, was really attracting it, in all other directions towards us ; and for this plain reason, that it could be invested *here*, by foreigners, in

exportable Commodities more profitably than in any other Country whatever. The consequence was, that the precious metals flowed to us from every spot of the Globe to which our goods could go in return for it; and although the supply which we derived through Channels so novel and circuitous was inadequate to our wants in the early stages of the Continental System, there is good reason for believing, that, if that system had continued much longer in operation, the new tracks would have become more beaten, and the precious metals would have travelled the necessary round, and have reached us in quantities sufficient for our commerce, with those Countries which prohibited their merchants from accepting any other payment at our hands.

The “ Prices Current ” of this period here, and on the Continent, shew that a remittance in goods was far more lucrative than one in gold : and, consequently, although high premiums were then given for gold, which was to be sent to the Continent, far higher premiums were, at the same time, being given for French Licences, which were occasionally granted to import goods.

In such a state of things as this, so many features may be discovered which are dissimilar from those of depreciation, that it is difficult to help questioning the exclusiveness of that one, and certainly most important, feature, in the high price of gold.

When too it is seen that Mr. Canning, while he confirmed, as before observed, all the resolutions of the Bullionists which tended to establish the true theory of money, rejected that one resolution, which was to bring that theory into practice *at a given time*, regardless of intermediate events, it seems highly probable that his mind was impressed with the opinion, that there were in force circumstances of such a nature, as defied, so long as they lasted, the application of that theory. He seems to have conceived that it was not a question of time, but of circumstances, and that therefore a change of circumstances, at whatever time it might happen, was the necessary preparation for the reception of the theory.

The French Decrees, and the British Orders in Council, would of course terminate with the war. To the recurrence of peace; therefore, and not to the lapse of a given space of time, arbitrarily appointed, he referred the resumption of cash payments; and a moment's reflection on the effects which the approach of peace produced will shew with what singular propriety he selected that course.

Peace, simply as peace, was not the necessary event; it was a discontinuance of the Continental system which was required, and for that he could only look with certainty to a discontinuance of the existing war: for, it is not to be

*supposed that he deemed a suspension of cash payments as a necessary accompaniment of a state of hostilities.*

Prior, then, to the peace, when Napoleon first experienced reverses in Russia, the observance of the French Decrees began to relax in the ports of his unwilling allies; and instantly our exportable commodities began to rise in value, and gold to fall in price.

His total defeat soon after opened all the Northern ports to British commerce, and then occurred that reversal of our various mercantile positions which seem so strongly to corroborate this view of the subject.

Hemp, timber, corn, wine, every article usually imported from the Continent for our own consumption, fell greatly in price. Cottons, wool, sugar, coffee, and every article of our export trade, rose in nearly similar proportion. Gold fell; the exchanges rose, and an immense progress was rapidly made towards that natural level, and relative position, which mercantile affairs assume when left to their natural courses.

We held in the country surplus stocks of goods, applicable to exportation sufficient to redeem for us all our proper stock of gold. With eagerness, and in haste, the foreigner produced the gold and took the goods; giving us, *in gold*, far greater prices for the goods than they had before been selling for in Bank paper.

If we had lost our gold by reason of the depreciation of our paper; that is to say, if the foreigner had rejected our goods because of their high prices, and had taken our gold for the sake of its intrinsic value, we could only have tempted him to restore the gold by tendering to him our goods at very reduced prices. But the direct reverse of this took place, and a strong current of gold to England was contemporaneous, with a great increase of the money-value of our exportable goods.

This progress to the ordinary relations of trade in a wholesome state, was interrupted by the sudden return of Napoleon from Elba, and the renewal of the war. But notwithstanding this interruption, which was happily of short duration, we saw the exchanges at par, and gold within a fraction of the Mint price before the end of a year, from the final settlement of the peace. This, then, was the time so correctly pointed out by Mr. Canning for the resumption of cash payments: all the reasons for which the suspension had been first adopted, and subsequently continued with his concurrence, had *then* ceased to exist; and *then* it was, that the Government ought to have restored the Currency to its ancient footing; but unfortunately the majority of its members had been anti-bullionists, and were disposed to consider an inconvertible paper currency as an advantage rather

than an evil. By two *Acts*, one passed July 1814, and the other in March 1815\*, the Bank restriction was continued until July 1816, and what was more unfortunate, was defended by the Government in a way, that made it evident that there would be no indisposition on its part to consent, at a future period, to a further prolongation.

The Bank, therefore, so far from making preparations to resume cash payments actually extended their issues, the consequence of which was that the depreciation of Bank paper with respect to gold, increased to an amount which was then exclusively to be attributed to its excess. The Bank being therefore more than ever unprepared to resume their payments in cash, the Government again (not unwisely) consented to maintain the restriction till the 5th of July 1818, in which year in the month of May yet another *Act* passed, authorizing the restriction till the month of July 1819. These several measures were not carried without meeting with considerable opposition. At last the truth of the doctrines of the Bullionists began to make a considerable impression, and the Government determined to appoint a Secret Committee to report on the practicability of resuming cash payments. The Committee recommended their

Mr. Canning was not then in England.

resumption, and accordingly Bills were brought in by Mr. Peel, fixing the 1st of February, 1820, as the day on which the Bank were to be bound to pay its notes in gold bullion if demanded, in sums not less than sixty ounces, and after the 1st of May of the same year, in sums not less than thirty ounces. This mode of paying in bullion was to be in force for not less than two, nor more than three years, and then every note was to be convertible at the pleasure of the holder into the current coin of the Realm. It was likewise enacted at the same time, that the circulation of one pound notes in England should cease and determine on the 1st of January 1826; whereby the Bank were necessitated to prepare, in good earnest, for the contingency which they had so long succeeded in averting. Accordingly the Directors, and consequently the Country Bankers, began to contract their issues, and continued to do so far beyond what was sufficient \*, to meet the new state of things which was about to grow up out of these Bills. Unfortunately, at the very moment when this contraction of the Currency was taking place, the country was inundated with corn, owing to vast importations from abroad, and to two harvests of unusual

\* It appears by Mr. Sedgwick's tables that the amount of Country Bank Paper in circulation in 1818 was 20½ millions, while in 1821-22-23 it was reduced to little more than 8 millions.

abundance ; which was attributable not only to the fineness of the season, but to the additional land which the previous high prices, occasioned by scarcity, had brought into cultivation. This glut, combined with the diminution in the currency, reduced the price of all farming produce so low, that the distress of the Agriculturists was extreme ; and the Country Gentlemen not unjustly attributing the heaviness of their misfortune to the contraction of the Currency, but nevertheless without reflecting that a real deficiency such as then existed, could not in the nature of things be of long duration, succeeded in the course of the Session of 1822 in persuading, or forcing the Government to consent to the extension of the time allowed for the circulation of one pound notes from the 1st of January 1826, to the 1st of January 1833. The Country Bankers thus again relieved from the necessity of providing gold to replace the one pound notes, and the Bank, in its turn, from supplying the Country Bankers (the Bank itself not then having any one pound notes in circulation), both parties were enabled, not only to increase their issues, so as to raise the Currency to its proper level, but to raise it very considerably above that level, which had they been compelled to keep gold to replace the one pound notes they could not have done ; for it is a well known fact, that when a currency composed of gold, and paper

convertible at will into gold, becomes depreciated by excess, the coin is depreciated in exactly the same proportion as the paper; and that *then* that portion of the Currency which is intrinsically valuable, viz. the gold, is sent out of the country. To have retained the gold which they would have wanted they must have kept back their issues. This extension of the time for circulating the one pound notes would, however, never of itself have been sufficient to have produced all the disastrous consequences which ensued, and which are to be attributed in a great degree to overtrading.

The effect of Mr. Peel's Bill having, as has been shewn, produced a contraction of the currency below its proper level, low prices, the certain consequence of that contraction, every where prevailed. The natural filling up of the deficiency in the currency gave prices a *tendency* to a moderate rise, whereby all commercial transactions had a *tendency* to become profitable. This tendency had just began to give an impulse to speculation, when Mr. Pecl's Bill was suspended, so far as related to the withdrawal of the one pound notes. An extension of paper issues immediately followed, which was, of course, accompanied by a rapid and considerable rise in prices, and a proportionate increase of profits. Increase of profits, in its turn, was an incitement to speculations, which, again, by affording facilities for

the still further issue of paper, still further raised prices. Thus the over-abundance of the currency induced over-trading, and over-trading induced an over-issue of currency. They acted and re-acted upon each other. These operations, however, could not have taken place to any thing like the extent which they did, had not the necessity for keeping gold at home been in a great measure removed by the relaxation of the law for the abolition of the one pound notes. In consequence of that relaxation, the Bank no longer caring to retain their gold, proceeded to discount bills at *4 per cent.*, and their example was speedily followed by the private Bankers. This reduction of the rate of discount tempted many to commence speculations of which they would otherwise never have dreamt, while the little interest yielded by the Funds, in consequence of their high price, produced amongst many a desire to obtain what they considered more advantageous investments. Thus Loans by foreign nations were obtained upon the slightest security, and Shares in Joint Stock Companies, in furtherance of the most extravagant schemes, found ready purchasers, at still more extravagant prices: yet such was the universal credulity, that those who purchased shares one day, at a price, in point of fact, immeasurably above their true value, found the next that that price had considerably risen; so that the

main consideration in buying began to be, not whether the speculation was wise, but whether the shares were likely to advance in the money market. The folly and danger of these wild projects were pointed out by Lord Liverpool and Mr. Huskisson in their places in Parliament, but this was all that it was judged wise or expedient to do ; for, as Mr. Canning expressed it, the Government “ knew not how any measure “ could be framed to deal with these speculations “ of unreasoning avarice, which would not at “ the same time have borne so hard on honest “ industry and national enterprize, that it would “ have been likely to do more harm than good. “ The inordinate appetite for gain, if left to “ itself, could not fail to work its own cure, “ through its own certain disappointment.”

In the spring of 1825 the mania arrived at its height. Before that time the excess in the circulating medium had produced visible effects by the exchanges turning against us. The coin, the only intrinsically valuable portion of the circulation, had been exported in enormous quantities, and a sensible impression had been made upon the coffers of the Bank of England. At last the Directors, who most unwisely had extended their issues after the drain upon them had begun, found themselves under the absolute necessity either of contracting their issues, or else of exposing themselves to the situation of

being unable to meet the demand for coin which was made upon them, not for circulation in this country, but for exportation to others. The withdrawal by the Bank of England of its issues compelled the Country Banks in their turn to withdraw theirs ; either voluntarily, or from their paper being in excess, as compared with that of the Bank of England, by its being returned upon their hands. Those Bankers who had acted wisely, and had not lent their notes except upon good security, were ready to receive them ; but others (of which there were many) who, without a sufficient capital of their own, for the sake of getting their notes into circulation, had lent them on bad security, when thus returned upon them, were unable to take them up. It was in vain that they applied to those to whom they had given credit. The speculations into which, by these means, the borrowers had entered, had for the most part failed. The goods which they had caused to be manufactured, or had imported when a redundant currency had raised prices, they had then to sell, when a diminished currency had lowered them, and when a glutted market had rendered them almost unsaleable. Some few small banks were thus forced to suspend their payments.

The stoppage of one Bank is sure to excite suspicion of the stability of others. ~~Re~~ upon those most open to suspicion commenced,

in the progress of which new failures served but to increase the alarm. At last, in the beginning of December, a Bank in the West of England of high character and extensive connections was obliged to stop. The panick then became universal in that part of the country, and quickly spread throughout England. Expresses from the Bankers were sent to London in order to obtain funds for meeting the anticipated demands. Sales of their funded property were ordered at any sacrifice and to an unexampled extent. They withdrew their balances from their London correspondents, who in their turn began to sell their stock to turn into money all their convertible property. The funds fell, and the Bank of England was besieged for gold. Some of the London Houses, unable to meet these sudden demands upon them, stopped their payments—the panick became universal. Firms of the highest character, and the longest standing became suspected, and bills, which, in ordinary times, would have produced their holders nearly their equal amount in money, were absolutely unavailable. No one would trust his neighbour, and such was the scarcity of money on the Stock Exchange, and such the eagerness to sell, that for a short period stock itself was not convertible into money. The Bank itself was not without its cares: it knew that, come what might, the Government would not consent

to make itself a party to the suspension of Cash Payments. Their Bullion, which lay in the cellars to an immense amount, was useless, and although the Mint worked night and day at its conversion into coin, the money thus produced was necessarily very limited \* in quantity. In this emergency the Directors, with the advice of the Government, determined to issue their one pound notes, and to make advances of money upon stock. These prompt measures afforded great relief, while the return of the old coin to an immense extent prepared the Bank for meeting any contingency: the panick thus, having lasted with its extreme violence about a week, gradually began to subside. In the course of it, however, the crash amongst the bankers was unexampled. In London alone seven failed, while no less than seventy Country Bankers suspended their payments.

The misery and distress occasioned by these disasters, did not diminish as fast as the panick which occasioned them. Thousands had been ruined in the convulsion, and confidence, after such a shock, was not easily restored. The Government had abstained from all interference, nor, when Parliament met on the second of February in the following year (1826), did the Ministers hesitate to declare, that they

\* The Mint will not coin at the rate of ~~more~~ than £200,000 per week.

had no intention of proposing any specific legislative relief for the purpose of alleviating, or ~~remedying~~ the evils resulting from the ~~recent~~ embarrassments, and that they intended to confine their interposition to applying such corrections, as were best calculated to prevent a recurrence of similar evils.

In the course of the debate at the opening of the Session, the Ministers stated that the palliations which they intended to suggest were, the prohibition of the circulation of notes under 5*l.* after a certain period, and the repeal in the Charter of the Bank of England, of that clause which limited to six, the number of partners in a Country Bank. For carrying this last plan into effect the Government had previously obtained, by negotiations, the consent of the Bank.

So soon as the intention respecting the small notes was divulged, the Country Bankers set to work to defeat it. Large demands for stamps for one pound notes came in from all quarters; so that the Government, finding that their plan for the suppression stood a chance of being completely nullified, took upon itself the responsibility of at once prohibiting the issue of any additional stamps. This act was complained of in Parliament as an unconstitutional exercise of authority; but it was clearly shown, that had the prohibition been delayed for the sanction of the Legislature, the mischief would have been

done before that sanction could have been obtained.

On the 10th of February the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a Committee of the whole House, moved as a resolution, that "all notes under the value of five pounds, and stamped previously to the 5th of February 1826, should be allowed to circulate until the 5th of February 1829, and no longer." In introducing this resolution, Mr. Robinson ascribed the distress to over-trading, and in arguing upon the merits of the plan he chiefly confined himself to showing that the Country was in a state well able to carry through the measure, taking it for granted that the benefits of a metallic currency, as tending to diminish fluctuations in its value, did not require demonstration. The resolution however was not allowed to pass without considerable opposition. Mr. Baring objected to it, not because he considered it theoretically unwise, but because he thought it so ill suited to the then situation of the Country as to be calculated to aggravate the distress. Other members opposed it from an abstract partiality for paper money, and a dread that its "adoption would produce evils of an extent which it would be impossible for any human being to calculate." \* And others again as being wholly inefficient for its end.

\* Vide Sir John Wrottesley's Speech, Feb. 19. 1826.

Mr. Canning spoke late in the debate. He pointed out, that although the opposite characters given of the measure could not both be true, yet that both might be, and were incorrect. Its dangers had been magnified by exaggerated statements, and its inefficiency established by assuming that "it was applied to causes with which it did not profess to deal." That there was no real danger in it Mr. Canning shewed by explaining how small a portion of the currency there was to be withdrawn, and how considerable a period (three years) was to be allowed for the operation. But while he "denied that it was an effort which "the Country could not easily bear, he asserted "that, however diminutive the immediate object "might appear, it would be great and mighty in "principle, if the gradual diminution of the "paper circulation of the Country Banks had "the effect of restoring, in the opinions and "minds of men, the fixed and unerring principle of a metallick standard for the currency "of the Country. If such were the effect, it "would achieve a great good and would conquer a growing evil; an evil which, if not stopped in time, would go on increasing until "it became incalculable and insurmountable."

Mr. Canning, like Mr. Robinson and Mr. Huskisson, attributed the distress to over-trading. He did not, however, "charge the Country Bankers with originating the spirit of specu-

“ lation, but he thought it impossible to deny that  
“ they were a source from whence that inordi-  
“ ~~name~~ speculation had derived its aliment. ‘ The  
“ ‘ object of the measure was to have the current  
“ ‘ in that place dammed up,’ leaving the originat-  
“ ing causes to be operated upon, not so much  
“ by any specifick measures, which human legis-  
“ lation could devise, as by the returning good  
“ sense of the Country, by painful experience,  
“ and by awakened reflection.’’ The abolition  
of one pound notes, by necessitating the Country  
Bankers to watch the supply of gold, would  
render them cautious in their issues of paper;  
and although he was not so absurd as “ to assert  
“ that the measure would directly put an end to  
“ our commercial embarrassments, yet he believed  
“ it would materially prevent the recurrence of  
“ that distress, which, beginning with the higher,  
“ was sure to find its way sooner or later to the  
“ lower classes of society.”

In the course of his speech, Mr. Baring having asserted that the Government had so clogged and embarrassed the Bank that that body was no longer able to manage the circulating medium of the Country, Mr. Canning entered into a long explanation to expose the fallacy of this assertion.

After Mr. Canning had spoken, Mr. Baring moved an amendment to the effect, that ~~that~~ was not the moment for entering into a consider-

ation of the Banking system of the Country. Mr. Brougham concluded the debate, in a short, powerful speech, in which he handsomely supported to the utmost the course which the Government were pursuing. The motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was carried by a majority of 222 to 189; the division being understood to be taken on the principle of the measure.—To the credit of the Whig Opposition, it must not be forgotten, that in this struggle they came forward in support of what they believed to be right, entirely putting aside all the interests of party. “Their conduct,” said Mr. Canning in writing to a friend at this time, “and particularly that of Mr. Brougham, has “been in the highest degree honourable, and “praiseworthy.”

No sooner was the determination of the House of Commons thus decidedly expressed, than the Country Bankers, some from prudential considerations, others perhaps from a desire to thwart the progress of the Bill, set to work to withdraw from circulation those notes which had not been returned to them. The consequence of this was, that, in some districts, there was great difficulty in carrying on the common transactions of life, sufficient time not being allowed to supply the deficiency occasioned by their withdrawal. To obviate this inconvenience, by securing a supply of circulating medium

in the case of any sudden vacuum, when the Bill was in Committee the Government proposed a clause to allow the Bank of England to continue to issue one pound notes, dated subsequently to the 5th of February, but not later than the 10th of October; but these were not to continue to circulate for a longer period than those which bore an earlier date. The clause was carried by a majority of 187 to 24; and the Bill was also carried, on the 7th of March, by a still larger majority. In the House of Lords the Bill encountered but little opposition.

During the time that this measure was making its progress through Parliament, great excitement was produced throughout Scotland and Ireland lest similar measures should be applied to those Countries.

There does not seem to be any good reason upon principle why the same system, which was desirable to be enforced in England, should not be enforced throughout the whole of the United Kingdom. Still, as the Banking System of Scotland is conducted on different principles from what it is in England, and as failures there were events of very rare occurrence, the argument of, “Let well be left alone,” was deserving of no inconsiderable weight. Committees were appointed to take the subject into consideration; and in consequence of the reports which they made,

the idea of interfering with the Scottish or Irish currency was abandoned.

The other Bill introduced by Government, allowing Private Banks to consist of an unlimited number of Partners (not within sixty miles of London), passed both Houses after considerable discussion. To this Bill was added a clause, explaining and enlarging the powers of the Bank, in establishing Branch Banks in different parts of the Kingdom.

These measures, although well calculated to prevent the recurrence of a convulsion such as had so recently agitated the Money Market, were not adapted for curing the evils which had arisen from it, and which manifested themselves in a stagnation of all commercial transactions, and in such a general want of confidence that the scarcity of money in the City was without example. In this posture of affairs, a very decided opinion prevailed that Government ought to interfere, as had been done more than once before, by an issue of Exchequer Bills, to be lent in loans on merchandize, or other substantial securities. The Members of the Government judged differently. They thought that the temporary advantage which might result from such a proceeding was very doubtful, while it would have the effect of encouraging the merchants to look to the Government for support, instead of to their own natural resources. When the idea

was first mooted, Lord Liverpool and Mr. Robinson, but especially the former, pledged themselves against the issue, from the strongest genuine conviction of its impolicy: and when a deputation from the Merchants in the City waited on those Ministers to urge their consent, they gave a distinct and positive denial. The Government had, previously to this answer being returned to the Deputation, offered to keep the Bank harmless, if it would go into the market and buy up two millions of Exchequer Bills, and thus increase the amount of the currency; the scarcity of which was asserted to be the main cause of the want of confidence. The Bank Directors however did not consent to do so, probably from thinking that the House of Commons was with them, and that they would be able to force the Government to do what they (the Directors) thought best. In point of fact, the Ministers were well assured that the majority of the House of Commons was against them. Affairs were in this state when Mr. Wilson, one of the members for the City, brought this subject\* under the notice of the House, in presenting a petition from the Merchants and Bankers of London, praying the House to take into consideration the commercial distress. Mr. Wilson strongly recommended the issue of Exchequer

Bills, and concluded by giving notice that on the Tuesday following he should move that the Petition be referred to a Select Committee. In the course of the discussion which followed, Mr. Pearse, one of the Bank Directors, drove as it were the Government into a corner, by declaring the resolution of that body not to lend money on goods. For this declaration Mr. Canning was not unprepared ; and he had gone down to the House fully determined to resign, rather than to yield. He felt, indeed, that even if the Government could have conceded the point with credit, that it would have been a betrayal of their trust to have given up to popular clamour, and to have acted contrary to their own conviction of what was right. " For if," said he, " considering " this merely a fair measure for Parliamentary " consideration, under circumstances of great " publick distress and difficulty, we were disposed " to popularize by sanctioning it, can it be doubt- " ed that it would only be necessary for my right " honourable friend to stand up in his place, " and say, ' I see there is a combination of opi- " nions against me ; and therefore, notwith- " standing my judgement remains unshaken " and unchanged, I will yield to the torrent " which sets against me ? ' But, Sir, if my " right honourable friend were to hold such " language, I say that he would decidedly desert " his duty ; he would violate the weighty trust

" reposed in him as a Member of the Government, by acceding to that as a popular expedient which his deliberate judgement had taught him to reject as being in itself prejudicial to the interests of the whole community. As an individual Member of Parliament, he might perhaps yield to the urgency of the case, and abandon what he conceived to be the strict line of his duty when assailed by a strong sense of misery, supported by the eloquence of distress. But as a responsible Minister of the Crown, called upon to bring forward a proposition of relief, — to carry it through the House, — to fight for it against all the objections which may be brought against it, (for although the wish seems so unanimous, objections will be brought against it from some quarter,) — and hereafter to contend against all the accusations which might be the consequence of its failure, or even of its success; — why then, if his judgement is not thoroughly convinced, it becomes his duty to waive every other consideration, to persevere in his determination, to leave to Parliament to adopt such steps as it may deem expedient, and to place measures which he does not think it right to sanction in hands more capable of carrying them into execution." Such were the principles by which Mr. Canning considered that a Minister of the Crown ought to be guided when

the opinion of the Legislature might happen to be decidedly at variance with his own — principles not partial in their application, but such as no conscientious British Minister, alive to his own honour and consistency, or anxious for his own efficiency as a publick man, ought ever to be induced to disregard:

Mr. Canning, having thus let the Bank and the House know that they “should not force “the Government into an issue of Exchequer “Bills, without forcing them out,” declared that in the opinion of the Government there was but one proper remedy, viz. “the exercise by the “Bank of the power vested in it by its charter “to make advances upon the security of pro-“perty or, merchandize to those who might “require them.”

This resolute conduct produced its effect on the Bank Directors; and before the day arrived on which the subject was to have been again brought forward, the House of Commons were informed that the Bank had consented to set apart three millions, to be lent on the security of merchandize.

This announcement had the almost immediate effect of restoring confidence, which the Budget, brought forward on the 13th of March, served to strengthen, by disappointing the gloomy predictions in which many had indulged respecting the resources of the Country. “The crisis,”

said Mr. Canning in a private letter written the day after the Budget, "is now past; and " although it is impossible not to feel most sensibly for the loss of so much wealth, as has been actually destroyed in the course of the last four or five months, and for the fate of so many worthy and blameless individuals who have shared the fate of the more rash and culpable speculators, yet upon the whole the passing storm will have done good, will have swept away a great deal that was noxious and rotten, and will have left our general prosperity, somewhat lowered indeed for the moment, but essentially more wholesome, and more sound."

It was whilst that storm continued with unabated violence, and whilst all branches of trade were suffering more or less severely from its effects, that the opponents, both in and out of Parliament, of all liberal notions on the subject of commerce, assailed the Government with the utmost virulence of calumny and misrepresentation. The silk trade, and the shipping interests being, in common with all others, in a state of great depression, innumerable petitions were presented to Parliament, attributing all their misfortunes to the changes which had been made in the laws respecting them. Mr. Ellice, member for Coventry, a large silk manufacturing town, on the 28th of February moved that all

the petitions which had been presented on the subject of the silk trade should be referred to a Select Committee. Mr. Ellice himself was friendly to the principles of Free Trade ; and the most that he contended for was, that in the present instance those principles had been un- wisely applied. Mr. Williams (a lawyer) seconded the motion, and in the course of his observations insinuated that Mr. Huskisson was a “hard- hearted metaphysician,” who for the sake of his abstract theories could witness without emotion the misery which surrounded him. Mr. Huskisson followed Mr. Williams, and while he repelled with “scorn” the insinuation of want of feeling, which the learned member had hazarded, entered into an exposition of the system of commercial policy which the Government had pursued with a force of argument that carried conviction to his hearers. He then defended in detail the particular alterations which had been made in the Silk Laws, and shewed the extreme folly of imputing the embarrassments, under which that trade was then labouring to the alterations in question. It would be foreign to the purpose of this work to give at any length Mr. Huskisson’s arguments. Suffice it to say, that they remain unanswered to this day ; because, from having their foundation in truth they are, in fact, unanswerable.

It was in the course of the debate which fol-

lowed that Mr. Canning declared that "with  
 " his soul he adopted, and with his whole  
 " strength he would endeavour to maintain,  
 " Mr. Huskisson's measures ; for which, although  
 " he was ready to take his share of the respons-  
 " ability, he left to his Right Honourable  
 " friend the full and undivided glory." More  
 than satisfied with Mr. Huskisson's elaborate de-  
 fence of his commercial measures, Mr. Canning  
 abstained from going into details, contenting him-  
 self with laying down those general principles  
 which he considered, in commercial as well  
 as in political affairs, ought to be the guide of  
 a British statesman. "Why," he asked, in  
 rebuking the insinuations about metaphy-  
 sicians, "why is it to be supposed that the  
 " application of philosophy (for I will use that  
 " odious word), — why is it to be supposed  
 " that to apply the refinement of philosophy to  
 " the affairs of common life, indicates obduracy  
 " of feeling or obtuseness of sensibility? We  
 " must deal with the affairs of men on abstract  
 " principles ; modified, however, of course, ac-  
 " cording to times and circumstances. Is not  
 " the doctrine and the spirit which now animate  
 " those, who persecute my Right Honourable  
 " friend (Mr. Huskisson) the same which in  
 " former times stirred up persecution against the  
 " best benefactors of the world? Is it not the  
 " same doctrine and spirit which embittered the

“ life of Turgot, and consigned Galileo to the  
“ dungeons of the Inquisition ? Is it not a doc-  
“ trine and spirit such as these which have at  
“ all times been at work to stay publick advance-  
“ ment, and to roll back the tide of civilization ?  
“ —a doctrine and a spirit actuating little minds,  
“ who, incapable of reaching the heights from  
“ which alone extended views of human nature  
“ can be taken, console and revenge themselves  
“ by calumniating and misrepresenting those who  
“ have toiled to those heights for the advantage  
“ of mankind.”

“ I have not to learn,” he continued, “ that  
“ there is in the Country a faction (not politi-  
“ cal), small in numbers and powerless in might,  
“ who think that all advances towards improve-  
“ ment are retrogradations towards Jacobinism.  
“ These persons seem to imagine, that under no  
“ possible circumstances can an honest man en-  
“ deavour to keep his Country upon a line with  
“ the progress of political knowledge, and to  
“ adapt its course to the varying circumstances  
“ of the world. Such an attempt is branded as  
“ an indication of mischievous intentions, as  
“ evidence of a design to sap the foundations of  
“ the greatness of the Country. But I consider  
“ it to be the duty of a British statesman, in  
“ internal, as well as external affairs, to hold a  
“ middle course between extremes : avoiding  
“ alike the extravagancies of despotism, or the

" licentiousness of unbridled freedom; recon-  
 " ciling power with liberty — not adopting hasty  
 " or ill-advised experiments, or pursuing any  
 " airy and unsubstantial theories; not rejecting,  
 " nevertheless, the application of sound and  
 " wholesome knowledge to practical affairs, and  
 " pressing, with sobriety and caution, into the  
 " service of his Country, any generous and liberal  
 " principles, whose excess indeed may be dan-  
 " gerous, but whose foundation is in truth.  
 " This, in my mind, is the true conduct of a  
 " British statesman; but they who resist indis-  
 " criminate all improvements, as innovations,  
 " may find themselves compelled to submit to  
 " innovations, although they are not improve-  
 " ments."

The whole of this passage is extracted because it is equally pertinent to the times, by which it has been succeeded, as to those in which it was spoken. Care, however, must be taken not to misunderstand the principles laid down. It is the duty of a British statesman "*to adopt a middle course between extremes.*" He who vacillates from side to side, conceding at one time what he has opposed at another, does not "*adopt a middle course.*" If Mr. Canning sided with either extreme, he did so to preserve the balance; and he sided with that which was the weakest; but he who waits to side with the strongest, until by his opposition he has roused

its resentment into an uncontrollable exertion of power, betrays either a total deficiency of statesman-like sagacity in not foreseeing the effects of his own conduct; or else, if he does foresee them, loses all claim to integrity as a man, by pretending to oppose a consummation which he well knows that his own conduct is only serving to hasten.

Mr. Ellice's motion was negatived by a majority of 222 to 40.

No one ventured to bring the justice of the complaints of the ship-owners to the test of a motion on their behalf. They were not, however, less active than the silk manufacturers in denouncing the recent alterations as the cause of all their distress. Mr. Huskisson therefore judged it expedient to make a motion for the production of some returns, to explain and vindicate his policy. This he did in a speech, if possible, still more able and elaborate, than the one which he had made upon the Silk Question. These two speeches are models of sound reasoning, and will for ever stamp their author as belonging to the very first class of practical statesmen.

One of the grounds of attack upon the new system, with those, who, like Mr. Ellice, were convinced of the abstract truth of the principles on which it had been founded, was, that, before any alterations had been made with regard to a particular manufacture, the Corn Laws ought to

have been revised. In the course of 1825, when it was generally supposed the Parliament would not exist another Session, Mr. Huskisson had given a sort of promise, that he would bring the subject under the consideration of the Legislature in the following year. The postponement of the dissolution naturally altered his views; and while the Ministers admitted that it was one with which they would have to grapple, yet they would not discuss it that Session, because they thought that so extensive and important a question would not meet with that attention and unbiassed consideration which it required, from the members of an expiring Parliament. For this reason they announced their determination the first day of the meeting, to abstain, till the following year, from recommending any alteration of the existing Corn Laws. Notwithstanding, the tables of the two Houses of Parliament were covered with petitions on the subject; the agriculturists praying that no alterations might be made, the manufacturers that they might be forthwith revised. At last Mr. Whitmore, a gentleman who had always taken a very active part in these matters, made an effort to compel the Parliament to depart from its declared resolution, by moving (on the 18th of April), "That 'the House do now resolve into a Committee 'to consider the propriety of a revision of the

“Corn Laws.” The motion was rejected by a majority of 215 to 81; it being opposed by Mr. Huskisson simply on the ground that a Parliament, on the eve of dissolution, was not fitted to deal fairly with the subject.

This decision had not the effect of setting the question at rest for the remainder of the session; for before the prorogation Ministers found it necessary to do something, to relieve the distress amongst the manufacturers, which arose from the scarcity, and consequent high price of corn, and was further aggravated by the want of employment.

The Government therefore proposed to admit into the home market about 300,000 quarters of bonded corn; which having been imported in expectation of admission, were locked up in warehouses in the immediate vicinity of those places where the greatest suffering prevailed, and which from the mere circumstance of being within sight, yet out of reach, tended to exasperate in no small degree, passions, which the pangs of hunger, had previously excited. Further, as there was some alarm as to the prospects of the approaching harvest, Government demanded to be invested with a discretionary power to admit, if necessity should require it, the importation of 500,000 quarters of Foreign wheat at a fixed duty.

Both these measures were strongly opposed, but were, nevertheless, carried through both houses.

The wheat harvest turned out to be about an average crop ; the barley somewhat less ; but, the oats, in consequence of the very hot weather and the length of the drought, almost universally failed. Towards the end of August the price of oats had risen to the famine price of 80s. a quarter ; and since in the manufacturing districts this species of grain forms a very considerable portion of the food of the lower classes, who unfortunately, from still remaining unemployed, were the less able to support any unusual increase in the price of their food, their condition became one of extreme urgency.

For the alleviation of this distressing state of things, the Government had nothing left but to act upon its own responsibility.\* Parliament had been prorogued on the 31st of May 1826, and had been dissolved on the second of June. It could not therefore have been called together in time to have sanctioned the measures, to which it was necessary to have recourse to relieve the immediate pressure of so fearful an evil. Under these circumstances, the Government took upon itself at once to permit the importation of Oats, Beans, and Rye, by an Order in Council ; and at the same time Parliament was summoned to meet for the despatch

of business at the unusual period of the middle of November, to enable the Ministers to obtain an act of indemnity for their breach of the Law.

This was the single purpose for which the Parliament was to be assembled so early, and it accordingly furnished the principal topick in the King's Speech. Some complaints were made by the Opposition of the meagreness of that document, that it did not touch upon the general question of the Corn Laws, nor did it even so much as mention Ireland. But Mr. Canning reminded the House, that Parliament was not assembled at that inconvenient season of the year, for the purposes of general legislation, but for the sake of indemnifying the Ministers, who in a case of the most urgent necessity, had ventured to set aside the Law. He, at the same time, stated that the Government would not bring forward the plan for the revision of the Corn Laws until after the adjournment. The Indemnity Bill was passed without any opposition, and on the 1st of March in the following year (1827) Mr. Canning redeemed the pledge which he had given. The plan which he brought forward was the joint production of Lord Liverpool, and Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. Canning's speech was founded on a paper which Lord Liverpool had drawn up on the subject. The principle of the Bill was to draw as far as possible a proper line between fair remuneration to the producer, and

adequate sustenance to the consumer. Thus, when the price of Corn happened to be low in the estimate of the proposed Bill, its power was to be exerted in behalf of the producer without regard to the desires of the consumer: on the other hand, when in that estimate the price should happen to be high, the wants of the consumer were to be consulted, without reference, as to whether the price was sufficient to remunerate the producer, or not. The mode of operation was to restrain, or encourage the importation of corn by means of a graduated scale of duties, rising and falling inversely with the price, and running, in the one case, into extinction or nearly so, and in the other into practical, although not inexorable, prohibition. By this plan therefore it was proposed to revert to the principle of what had been the system respecting the Corn Laws for nearly the whole of the three last centuries, instead of that which was introduced by the law of 1815, when the Legislature adopted the principle of absolute prohibition up to a certain point (80s.), but qualified it by the opposite principle of unrestricted importation, so soon as the point of 80s. was turned. This Mr. Canning described "as an experiment to combine the most opposite principles in one, and the same act of Legislation." And "what," he asked, "was the consequence of the measure? Not that the extreme forces produced by these

“ operations a mean power, and went on amicably  
“ together ; but that each in its turn prevailed  
“ with its own peculiar mischief—and that you  
“ had within the extent of seven years, from  
“ 1815 downwards, every result that could deter  
“ men of observation and experience from ever  
“ resorting again to the principle, either of abso-  
“ lute prohibition, or of unlimited importation ;  
“ and, most undoubtedly, from any attempt to  
“ unite again the two together.

“ Let us enquire,” he said, “ what was the  
“ operation of this Law, without reference to  
“ price. It passed in 1815. The harvest of  
“ 1816, as is well known, was one of the most  
“ unfavourable that this Country ever expe-  
“ rienced. It was ascertained to be so, as early  
“ as the beginning of August in that year. It  
“ was on the 15th of August, 1816, that the  
“ average of prices was to be prepared, which  
“ was to govern the question of exclusion on the  
“ one side, or importation on the other, for the  
“ next three months. On the 15th of August  
“ the price of wheat was above the importing  
“ price of the Law of 1815 ; but it had not been  
“ so for a sufficiently long period to give an ave-  
“ rage price above the importing price.

“ The result was, therefore, that the ports re-  
“ mained closed during three starving months,  
“ from August to November 1816 ; and did not  
“ open until the 15th of November of that year,

“ after the price had been, for about fifteen weeks, above the importing price, and when all the Northern ports of Europe were shut against supply.

“ The ports opened in November 1816, and remained open till the November of the following year, when they closed, the average price being less than 80s. by the fraction of 5d. The harvest of the year 1817 having been nearly or quite as bad as that of 1816, we had again a scarcity of supply; but the ports thus closed in November 1817, of course, did not open until February 1818. Although the harvest of that year (1818) was most abundant, not only in this Country but in all the corn-growing countries of Europe, yet, by some accident, or by some contrivance, the ports were continued open on the 15th of November 1818, by a fraction of 2d.; and, by consequence, for the next three months, from November 1818, to the quarterly Average of February 1819, an extraordinary influx of foreign corn continued to inundate the Country, already inundated by a plenty of its own growth; prices were, in consequence, depressed to an unexampled degree.

“ Indeed, the effect of these three months' importations, produced by a fractional difference of 2d., was felt in the depreciation of the market for the three succeeding years. Thus,

“ by the System of 1815, the ports were shut  
 “ when the supply at home was deficient, and  
 “ when the introduction of foreign grain was  
 “ loudly called for—and opened when the home  
 “ market was glutted, and when it was most ex-  
 “ pedient to shut out foreign supply: and the  
 “ one operation and the other were produced by  
 “ fractions of 5d. and 2d. respectively. Thus the  
 “ consequence of setting these two extreme prin-  
 “ ciples in action was, that each class of the  
 “ community, in its turn, became a sufferer.”

In the debate which followed Mr. Canning's exposition, several of the agriculturists manfully expressed themselves as satisfied with the principle of the plan. The Bill, founded on the resolutions with which Mr. Canning concluded, passed by large majorities through its several stages. In the course of its progress attempts were made by both parties to alter the scale. By the one, to raise 60s., the sum proposed as the remunerating price to the agriculturist, to 64s.; by the other, to lower it to 50s. The Bill was sent up to the Lords before the House adjourned for the Easter Recess.

Before the time arrived for its discussion by the Lords, a great change had taken place in the composition of the Government; and the Bill which Lord Liverpool had prepared with such anxious care, and left, as it were, a legacy to his country, was destined to be defeated by

an individual who had been for many years the colleague of that nobleman. The history of these proceedings does not belong to this chapter ; they cannot be classed under the head of fiscal policy.

This rejection of the Corn Bill was the more regretted by Mr. Canning, because of his increasing confidence in Mr. Huskisson's system of Commercial and Colonial Policy — to the full success of which, some relaxation of our existing Corn Laws was clearly necessary. That system, although not hastily copied by other Countries, was, at least, kindly received by all, with the exception of the United States of America, whose participation in its benefits was more direct and more palpable than that of any other of our common competitors. The waiver of our Colonial rights in 1822, in favour of America, had been ill requited by the United States, who had made the era of the admission of their Ships to a free participation of the intercourse trade the time for commencing a system, on their part, which sought to drive British Ships entirely out of it. The duties and restrictions imposed by the United States, in furtherance of this object, would have justified an immediate and total revocation of the “Boon” we had granted ; but we had contented ourselves, for a while, with merely countervailing a tonnage duty, to which our Ships were made liable in the American ports.

The permanent remedy for such treatment, if persisted in, was provided in Mr. Huskisson's act of 1825; at the same time that the privileges granted to foreigners by that act were greater than those conceded in Mr. Robinson's acts of 1822, particularly in not confining their return voyage to their own Country. The discontinuance of that restriction seemed sufficient to deprive the Americans of even a plausible ground of complaint. The latter act differed also from the former acts in offering the intercourse to the shipping of all people equally with that of the Americans, but to *none*, except on the condition, that British shipping and British trade should be treated by them, respectively with similar or equivalent liberality.

Mr. Huskisson's act passed on the 5th of July 1825, and was to come into operation on the 1st of January 1826, so that unless before that day the United States removed the duties and restrictions which they had imposed directly and indirectly on British ships, *their* ships became legally excluded from the ports of our Colonies. To provide, however, for extraordinary cases of an impracticable nature, and unworthy of contest, the prohibitory clause reserved a saving power to the King: and the Americans apparently believed that this power was given, for the express purpose of being exercised in their favour, in case they should be resolute in

their refusal to comply with the conditions. No specifick instructions having been transmitted to the Colonies to put the Act into execution (for none were strictly necessary), the Governments there allowed themselves to be persuaded into a similar supposition, and in this manner its operation was suspended during the early part of 1826.

A continuance of that suspension was afterwards connived at by the Government at home, in consequence of what they considered to be an indication, on the part of the United States, that they would comply with the required conditions.

These conditions had been brought explicitly under the consideration of Congress, by a petition presented from the people of Baltimore, early in 1826, praying that proper legislative measures should be taken, in order to secure to the subjects of the United States a participation in the trade offered to all Countries by the British act of Parliament. The accounts which reached England of the reception of that petition seemed so much to promise a favourable result, that instructions were sent to Mr. Vaughan, the British Minister at Washington, authorizing him, on an assurance that the offensive duties and restrictions were about to be withdrawn, to declare that the ships of the United States should not,

in the meanwhile, suffer any interruption of their trade with our Colonies.

The American Government, however, foreseeing what would probably be the fate of the petition, could not give such an assurance ; and Mr. Vaughan refrained from even communicating his instructions, lest his doing so should have been misconstrued “ into an improper appeal “ against the decision of the Legislature.”

The petition was, in the end, rejected ; and Congress refused to accept the Colonial trade upon the terms of our Law.

The British Government was, therefore, at full liberty to treat this deliberate determination of the United States in such manner as might be deemed most expedient. The question was not without its difficulties. To *risk* the total stoppage of the direct supply of stores to our West India Colonies might have subjected them to great temporary inconvenience : on the other hand, it might have been more to their ultimate advantage, to make an effort to open other sources of supply. For, if the Americans should refuse to sell us the staple articles of their export trade, because we would not allow them to be imported, except in our own ships, they could only commit such an act of self-privation under an impression that it would be of short duration, and that it was in their power to starve us into compliance at their pleasure.

This was a state of dependence on which Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson did not think that our Colonies held their prosperity; and they considered that the issue of that question had better be tried by an early experiment, lest the struggle, if deferred, should be forced upon us by still greater offences, at a more unfavourable time.

An Order in Council was, accordingly, under the authority of the Act, published on the 27th of July 1826, which went to prohibit the importation of Goods into our West India Colonies in Ships of the United States. This order was considerably drawn. It excepted the Northern Colonies from its operation; and, while its commencement was deferred to the 31st of December of that year, it legalized all previous transactions.

The consequences above mentioned were not of a nature *necessarily* to be apprehended; for it is by no means a matter of course that a country will refuse to *sell* its goods unless it is allowed to *carry* them to the buyer: but this was not the first contest of the kind which we had had with the United States; and it was more than suspected, that they would, as they had done before, meet our *inward* interdict on their Ships, with an *outward* interdict on ours; for they had long disowned our Colonial rights, and struggled to overturn our Colonial system,

founded upon them. But we had never listened to their pretensions when they assumed the form of claims, and though we had often abated the rigour of our system, every instance of concession had served but, as the exception, which proved the rule.

The Colonial system of all European Countries, when carried into extreme application, excluded all foreign goods, and all foreign ships. But a rational consideration of localities, and of the different products of different climates and soils, induced most countries to consent to various exceptions in respect of *goods*. The possession of Colonies, however, implies the possession of a mercantile marine; and therefore no Country, and least of all this Country, had any motive for making a similar exception in respect of *ships*.

One of the earliest and most important of the exceptions adopted by Great Britain, was, the admission into our West Indies, of the staple exports of the United States — “lumber and provisions.” We permitted the importation of those necessary articles without any professions of benefit intended to the United States, although we could not but know that the benefit to them was very great. We modified our system solely with a view to our own interest: and to shew how undisguisedly we made that interest our rule, we continued to exclude salt meat for the

benefit of Ireland ; and fish for the benefit of Newfoundland ; although *both* are articles of first necessity to the Colonies, and *both* are the cheap productions of the United States.

Men do not purchase what they are not in need of, and, no doubt, there is mutual advantage to buyer and seller : but although a ready source of supply is a convenience to a buyer, nothing is more offensive to him, than the arrogance of a seller, excited by a confidence in the absence of competition. When a seller attaches to the liberty of purchase other conditions than payment, it is time for the buyer to look about him in quest of other sources of supply.

Mr. Huskisson's Act of 1825 had this object in view. It not only extended the list of goods admissible from foreign countries, and permitted their importation from all parts of the world, in the ships of the country of their production, thereby facilitating the assortment of cargoes ; but also the more to encourage foreign ships to bring articles of necessity to our Colonies, it permitted those ships to carry return cargoes to any part of the world, which was not in the British Dominions.

No discriminating duty or charge was imposed on the foreign ship ; and the moderateness of the duties on lumber and provisions of the United States is proved by the fact, that, although they further incumbered the trade in

them with duties of their own, and although our Northern Colonies were her chief competitors, nine tenths of the supply of those articles to our West Indies were engrossed by the United States.

The pretensions of the United States to this trade were certainly of a very extraordinary nature. No sooner had we consented to their participation in it than they complained of the want of a fair equality with British subjects in carrying it on, first in relation to goods, because the lumber and provisions of Canada were not subjected to the duties charged on theirs : and next in relation to ships, because there were certain voyages which might be combined with the intercourse trade, in which British ships could be employed, and theirs could not. A British West-Indiaman, for instance, going out *in ballast* for sugar (as they commonly do) might call at an American port for a cargo of lumber ; and after landing that cargo in a West Indian port, might then load with sugar for England. And so, because, like the United States and all other Countries, we imposed duties on foreign goods, which we did not impose on our own — and because, like the United States and all other Countries, we did not permit foreign ships to trade between national port and national port, the Government of those States asserted that we had not given, as we professed, to *their* people an equality with our own, in the

trade we had opened to them: and, accordingly, they held themselves entitled to apply such clogs and impediments to *our* people, in that trade, as should, in their own arbitrary estimate, be equivalent to the disadvantages, under which they represented themselves to be labouring. Among the measures devised by them for effecting this imaginary balance, and for reducing our shipping to the assumed level with theirs, was one—in principle the most untenable perhaps that ever was contemplated by an intelligent commercial Country: they prohibited the “circuitous voyage;” that is to say, a British Ship was forbidden to lade, in an American port, *a legal cargo for a legal destination*, solely upon the ground of some other voyage, in which she had been previously engaged, or in which she might be afterwards employed. If the Ship did not come *from* the West Indies she was not allowed to lade *for* the West Indies.

While thus the direct trade only between the United States, and our West India Colonies was permitted to British Ships, there was, properly speaking, no direct trade open to them; for our West India productions were virtually prohibited in the United States by excessive duties, so that, being compelled to go out in ballast, the whole charge of the Voyage fell on the homeward cargo. Besides which, the West Indies were, as the Americans well knew, a situation ill calculated

to be made the domicile of the class of ships which must be there established, if the direct trade should be seriously undertaken by the British.

It may seem that the American ship would suffer a disadvantage of equal amount, in being compelled by the same cause (though of their own creating) to *return* empty. But this was not the case; the American Ship had also her contingent voyages peculiar to herself, and belonging to *her* national circumstances. After having landed her cargo of lumber in a British tropical Country and received payment in cash, she proceeded, in ballast, to a neighbouring tropical Country of *her own*; and she carried a cargo of sugar or cotton from an American port in the South, to an American port in the North—a trade, in which we never thought of employing a British ship.

There are also other trades, though not so peculiarly national to the Americans as the above, in connexion with which a trip, with lumber and provisions to the British West Indies, and a supply there of hard dollars in payment, constituted a very convenient part of the adventure. And it is a curious fact, that one of the chief advantages of the intercourse trade to the Americans, and for which they chiefly feel the loss of it, lies in the opportunities they have of conducting it by “circuitous voyages.”

" Assuredly the expedient of confining us to the "direct voyage" was a contrivance of considerable ingenuity.

No people have ever professed so strongly as the Americans, to be ready to exchange with other countries that freedom of navigation which is to give exercise to the peculiar faculties of each: and yet have we seen them tracing our ships around the Globe to compute their profits in foreign ports — prying into transactions with which they have no concern, and surpassing all other people in the invention of contrivances, and make-weights for counteracting the advantage of any such faculty in a rival.

After such treatment as this, deliberately continued in the face of the Act of 1825, we could never hope that a British ship would have a "clear stage" in an American port: and nothing remained, but for us either to withdraw altogether, the concession, by which we had exposed our ships to a contest in which they would not have "fair play;" or, to acknowledge our own inability to do so, on account of the *entire* dependence of our West India Colonies on the United States.

It is a remarkable circumstance in the history of commercial rivalries, that extraordinary efforts, to secure the whole of a particular branch of trade, have generally terminated in the loss of the whole.

The advocates of monopoly seldom look ~~far~~  
before them, for they are mostly the ~~best~~ spoiled  
“children” of easy-earned profits.

The stream which is dammed up to an excessive height for the sake of a great head of water in a particular spot, breaks its bank higher up, and finding a new course in a deeper valley, returns no more to its former channel.

Our West India Colonies were never more abundantly or more cheaply supplied than they now are, and have been, since the United States shut their ports against British Ships. At their own expense they have made dépôts of their goods at neutral Islands, and large portions of them find their way through our own Colonies in the North. The first prices of the goods suffering deduction for the extra charge or double circuitous conveyance.

It must be remembered that the contest has reference to ships, and not to goods; and therefore since the stoppage of the direct trade, our laws have received numerous modifications with a view to render our Northern Colonies the principal channel for its indirect course.

The river St. Lawrence and its Lakes wash the frontier of an immense district of the most fertile lands of the United States, and which have no other efficient outlet for their products: and such are the improvements which, stimulated by the interruption of the Atlantick intercourse,

have been made in the navigation of that River, that, if we persevere in our present regulations, or in others of similar operation, the effect will now be, — to transfer to the back Provinces of the United States that market for their production which had previously been enjoyed by the Provinces on the Atlantick. In that case the goods passing the mouth of the St. Lawrence can only be shipped, for sea, in a British Port, and as their destination will be to a British Port the *carriage* must, of necessity, be wholly our own.

We have before said, that it is not usual for a Country to refuse the sale of its goods, because it is not allowed to carry them to the purchaser.

The effects, therefore, we have been describing will not be produced by our exclusion of the American Ships, but by their rejection of ours.

We professed only to return to our antient Colonial system after the total failure of an experiment in departing from it. The opening of a new and far preferable channel of supply for us is the sole work of the Government of the United States. If this species of retaliation is inconvenient to the United States it was their own act, and they have had the power to dis-continue it.

We have never complained of it. If they have sacrificed their favourite market in order to inflict privations on us, — that is their expe-

riment: and if we suffer less, or more patiently, under those privations than they expected, or if we happen to think, that our position is rather improved than injured, by the consequences of their resentment,— it furnishes no case in which they are entitled to persevere in their course, and to upbraid us for not departing from ours.

From the moment, however, that they drove away our ships, they have constantly reminded us of the punishment they are inflicting on us, and pointed out the easy submission to their terms, by which our contrition will be received.

Their language, however, was not at first quite so placable, and their Minister commenced the discussion on the higher ground of argument and doctrine.

The Order in Council had hardly been published a month, before the American Minister in this Country, Mr. Gallatin, commenced a correspondence with Mr. Canning complaining of the order, the motives for issuing which he declared his utter inability to comprehend, at the same time that he feared that “for the very “reason that the object in view could not be “understood, it might be misconstrued.”

The two points most laboured by Mr. Gallatin in these notes which he addressed to Mr. Canning were, 1st, That the United States had placed British ships trading between the United States and the Colonies on a footing of perfect reci-

proxity; with the single exception of a discriminating duty on goods imported in such ships. 2dly, That this being the case, it was an ungracious act on our part absolutely to interdict all their trade with our Colonies, at a moment when the United States were prepared to enter into negotiations for settling this single ground of complaint.

With respect to the first point, what has already been stated is sufficient to show both the incorrectness of Mr. Gallatin's proposition and the important distinction between Colonial and general Trade—a distinction which Mr. Gallatin in his argument not only did not make, but the existence of which he seemed by no means disposed to admit. He endeavoured to confound the two kinds of Commerce, by asserting that the abstract right to interdict general trade, was the same as the abstract right to interdict Colonial Trade: "But," said Mr. Canning, "however that might be, one thing was certain, " that the exercise of that right had been so usual "in one case, and so unusual in the other, " that the difference of usage (if it were no "more) amounted almost to a difference in principle.

" When therefore it was contended that the " 'right' by which Great Britain prohibited " Foreign Countries from trading to her Colonies was the same 'right' with that by which

“ she might, if she thought fit, prohibit them from  
“ trading with herself, this argument implied  
“ that the special prohibition was a grievance to  
“ the United States, if not of the same *amount*,  
“ of the same *kind*, as the general prohibition  
“ would be.

“ This,” said Mr. Canning, “ was a doctrine  
“ which Great Britain explicitly denied.

“ Mr. Gallatin seemed to admit, indeed, that  
“ there was a time when the distinction between  
“ the colonial trade of the Mother Country was  
“ tenable; but he had assumed, in no obscure  
“ terms, on the part of the United States, that  
“ the colonial system was now virtually at an  
“ end.

“ Great Britain denied this assumption:  
“ and whatever relaxation she might think fit  
“ to introduce, for her own sake and that of her  
“ Colonies themselves, into her colonial system,  
“ she held her ‘right’ to maintain that system,  
“ as with respect to foreign nations, to be  
“ unaltered and entire.”

It was on these principles that Mr. Canning grounded his assertion, that the United States had not allowed us to carry on upon equal terms the share which we might take in that trade of which we had permitted them to partake; and it was because there existed between the British and American Government an unconquerable difference of principle, that Great

Britain preferred relaxing her Colonial System by the instrumentality of her own legislature rather than by diplomatick arrangement with a State, with whom she thus disagreed in opinion.

With respect to the second point, Mr. Canning shewed that he had no reason for believing that the Government of the United States were so ready as Mr. Gallatin asserted to enter into negotiations on the subject; nor “could he “understand on what ground it was, that it was “assumed at Washington that there would be, “at all times, an unabated disposition on the “part of the British Government to make the “trade of its West Indian Colonies a subject “of diplomatick arrangement.”

So far from that being the case, he declared that his Government not only could not consent to renew the negotiation, “so long as the pre-“tension recorded in the Act of 1823, and then “applied to British Colonies alone, remained “part of the law of the United States,” but could not even hold itself bound to remove the interdict on commercial intercourse whenever it might suit the United States to reconsider the measures which had occasioned its application.

There are discussed in this somewhat lengthy correspondence other topicks of minor interest, with which it is unnecessary to delay the reader. It is sufficient to observe, that it is now admitted on both sides of the Atlantick, that Mr. Canning

had the best of the argument, although due praise must not be denied to Mr. Gallatin, for the skilful manner in which he defended, what it is likewise admitted to be, a bad cause. If there were any of Mr. Gallatin's remarks, which would have been better omitted, they are those in which he sought to fasten on the Order in Council, and on the refusal to reconsider it, a character of hostility on the part of this Country towards the United States. Such was not their character, nor were either the one, or the other dictated by vindictive motives. Mr. Canning was not in any degree actuated "by sentiments either unfriendly, or disrespectful to the United States." No British statesman indeed ever laboured with greater zeal than he did, "to secure for as long a period as possible a reciprocal good understanding, and good will between these two kindred nations, whose respective interests, well understood, harmonized together as much as those feelings, necessarily growing out of the ties of common origin, laws, and language."

With the account of these discussions with the United States, this chapter must end. In the course of it, it has been shown that Mr. Canning's conduct on commercial affairs was regulated, not by views of mere temporary convenience, but by sound principles, which he did not adopt, until by the most deliberate examination he had

satisfied himself of their truth. This done, with unflinching firmness he supported Mr. Huskisson, in his wise and cautious application of those principles to the affairs of this country; and there can be no doubt that the determined spirit, thus displayed, was of the greatest assistance to that Minister, in enabling him to carry through his measures, and to bear up against the torrent of unmanly abuse, with which his opponents assailed his character, both as a man, and as a statesman.

## CHAP. XIV.

SLAVE TRADE. — SLAVERY. — NORTH-WEST COAST OF  
AMERICA.

THE topicks of Slave Trade, Slavery, and the North-West Coast of America, to which this chapter is dedicated, are so little connected with the subject-matter of the other parts of this work, that it would have been unnecessary to touch upon them, had not Mr. Canning taken too active a part respecting them, to allow of their being passed by without some notice.

1. *Slave Trade.* — The avidity with which Mr. Canning grasped at every opportunity to effect throughout the world the total abolition of the Slave Trade has on more than one occasion been mentioned. He had scarcely held office a week when he made his first effort at the Congress of Verona, but, it will be remembered, little or nothing was there effected. The three great military Powers looked with indifference upon a

question which did not affect their own immediate interests ; and to the discredit of the French Government, although that Country was pledged, in 1815, to the abolition of the trade, it not only connived at its being carried on, but even in the ports of France herself, ships were allowed to be fitted out with all the horrid paraphernalia, necessary for the accursed traffick.

From the New States of Spanish America Mr. Canning obtained what he desired : they bound themselves to its abolition ; and with Brazil, whose consent to its extinction was of all countries the most important, Mr. Canning's efforts were crowned with a success which, alas ! he himself did not live to witness. For it was not till the 17th of August 1827, that the Brazilian Government, agreed to abolish all Slave-trading after 1830, and to decree that those of its subjects who should be engaged in it, should be treated as Pirates.

Mr. Canning likewise negotiated a convention with the Ministers of the United States, by which was mutually conceded a qualified right of reciprocal search, and seizure, of those vessels, belonging to either country, suspected of carrying on the trade. The preamble of the convention stated that, by the laws of both countries Slave-trading had been declared piracy — an act of Parliament being passed, the day on which the convention was signed, to that effect. The

American Senate, however, refused to ratify this convention ; not from the least disposition to favour the trade, but from a suspicious fear of any collision between the armed vessels of the two Countries.

From Portugal, the only Country in Europe which had refused to abolish the trade, Mr. Canning also obtained a promise that in the new treaty, then shortly about to be negotiated, an article should be inserted, “ binding herself to its total abolition in her own dominions, and to co-operation with Great Britain for its total extinction.”

Upon the whole, therefore, it appears that Mr. Canning, during the time that he was in office, made very considerable progress in this humane work, for the commencement of which by this Country he had invariably been one of the sincerest, and warmest advocates.

2. *Slavery.* — The abolition of the Slave Trade was the first step towards the annihilation of Slavery itself. Nevertheless when the discussions took place respecting it, the abolitionists studiously disclaimed the ulterior purpose of emancipation ; not, however, on the ground of being content to purchase the one at the expense of for ever perpetuating the other, but because they held that the extinction of the Slave Trade ought to be argued exclusively on its own merits, and not in connexion with eman-

cipation ; a measure which, however desirable in itself, was not, they asserted, by any means a necessary consequence of that extinction. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that the measure of cutting off the supplies of slaves was well calculated, by increasing the value of those then existing, to secure for them a proportionable increase of care and consideration. The cessation of the British Slave Trade in fact did produce this effect for the Slaves in the British Colonies, and it is certain that their condition was very considerably ameliorated from 1807, the year in which the abolition passed, to 1822, at which time Mr. Canning became leader of the House of Commons. When this is asserted, it is not meant to deny that there were occasional instances of Slaves being treated with barbarous cruelty by their Masters ; but it would be as erroneous to judge of the general treatment of the Negro population by these isolated cases of barbarity, as it would be to assert, that all English apprentices were tormented because some apprentices had been beaten or starved to death by their masters. It is a fact, which those who know the truth must admit, that the lot of the Negro slave in our Colonies is in many respects better than that of the working population of many Countries of Europe. If they are ill, their owners feed and nurse them ; if they are

old, their owners are obliged to provide for them ; and although those owners had the right to separate them from their wives and families, and to remove them from their estates, it was a right that had almost grown into disuse, and certainly was not exercised so often, as the right to remove an English pauper from a parish in which he has not had the good luck to obtain a settlement. But although the condition of the Negro was in reality far from a bad one, yet the very name of Slave was so hateful to the ears of a free-born Briton, that many humane individuals, actuated by the best of motives, formed themselves into a Society for the express purpose of eradicating Slavery from every British Possession. This Society was instituted in January 1823. In that year great efforts were made in Parliament in furtherance of its objects, and Mr. Fowell Buxton, who was one of the most active members of the association, undertook to bring the condition of the Negro Slaves under the consideration of the Legislature. He accordingly gave notice that he should submit a motion on the subject on the ensuing 15th of May.

This notice excited no inconsiderable alarm amongst the West Indian proprietors, who naturally dreaded a discussion, which was certain to be but imperfectly understood by the Slaves, and was

therefore equally certain to excite in them exaggerated notions of the real intentions of the British Parliament. It seems too, that Mr. Buxton himself received divers warnings of the perils which he was provoking for the white inhabitants of the West Indies, by agitating the question. That gentleman was, however, not to be deterred from proceeding; and while he expressed his conviction that the dangers likely to arise from the course which he was about to pursue were "much over-rated," he declared that he felt sure that "the real blessings likely to accrue to "a million of men from the agitation" were such as it was impossible to "over-rate." Time has shewn, that if Mr. Buxton was correct in thinking that fear had magnified the dangers of discussion, yet that these dangers were much under-rated by himself, and certainly he was not wholly exempt from blame for introducing into his speech declamatory topicks of excitement, and arguments respecting the abstract injustice of Slavery, which if pushed to their legitimate conclusion, demanded an immediate decree of emancipation at whatever risk of destruction to the masters, and of ruin to the Slaves: such an immediate step Mr. Buxton himself had not enthusiasm enough to recommend; he was contented with suggesting, plans for ameliorating the condition of the Slaves, and a scheme for, what he called, the *gradual*, but what would have been

more properly designated as, the precipitate extinction of Slavery, by making free all children, born for the future of Slave Parents.

He concluded with moving as a resolution, " that the state of Slavery was repugnant to the principles of the British Constitution, and of the Christian Religion, and that it ought to be abolished throughout the British Colonies with as much expedition as might be found consistent with a due regard to the well being of the parties concerned."

Mr. Canning rose immediately after Mr. Buxton had concluded, in the hope that by at once making known the opinions of the Government, he might restrain the warmth of debate on so "fearful" a question, on which he said the use of "one rash word, perhaps even of one too ardent, an expression, might raise a flame not easily to be extinguished"

After pointing out the impropriety, not to say unfairness, of Mr. Buxton, in having recourse to the by-gone question of the Slave Trade as a topick of declamation; and remarking that the course pursued by that gentleman of addressing himself not to the judgment, but to the feelings of the House, was the one the least likely to lead to a satisfactory result, Mr. Canning entreated the Members to look at the then "situation of the West Indies not as a population accumulated by a succession of crimes,

“ but simply as it then existed.” We might deplore the crimes and condemn those who had encouraged their commission ; but committed they had been with the sanction of the British Parliament, whose duty it then was to look at the subject not with reference to the crimes alone, but to the nature of that state of society which had grown up in consequence of their perpetration.

“ Looking at the West Indies,” said Mr. Canning, “ I find there a numerous black population “ with a comparatively small proportion of “ whites. The question, therefore, to be decided “ is, how civil rights, moral improvement, and “ general happiness, can be communicated to “ this overpowering multitude of Slaves with “ safety to the lives, and security to the “ interests, of the White Population ? For the “ attainment of so great a good as raising these “ unfortunate creatures in the scale of being, “ sacrifices ought undoubtedly to be made ; but “ would I therefore strike at the root of the “ system—a system the growth of ages—and “ unhesitatingly and rashly level it at a blow ? “ Are we not all aware that there are knots “ which cannot be suddenly disentangled and “ must not be cut—difficulties which, if solved “ at all, must be solved by patient consideration “ and impartial attention, in order that we may

“ not do the most flagrant injustice by aiming  
“ at justice itself.”

Having thus shewn that treating the question partially was inconsistent with true equity, Mr. Canning proceeded to analyze the Resolution, which he described as commencing with “ a re-  
“ cital which greatly embarrassed him. It af-  
“ firmed ‘ that the state of Slavery was repug-  
“ nant to the principles of the British Consti-  
“ tution and the Christian religion.’ God  
“ forbid,” said he, “ that he who ventured to  
“ object to this statement should therefore be  
“ held to assert a contradiction to it! I do not  
“ say that the state of slavery is consonant to  
“ the principles of the British Constitution ;  
“ still less do I say that the state of Slavery is  
“ consonant to the principles of the Christian  
“ Religion. But, though I do not advance these  
“ propositions myself, nevertheless I must say,  
“ that in my opinion the propositions of the  
“ Honourable Gentleman are not practically  
“ true. If he mean that the British Constitu-  
“ tion does not admit of slavery in that part of  
“ the British Dominions where the constitution  
“ is in full play, undoubtedly his statement is  
“ true ; but it makes nothing for his object. If,  
“ however, he is to be understood to maintain  
“ that the British Constitution has not tolerated  
“ for years, nay more, for centuries, in the Colo-  
“ nies the existence of slavery, a state of society

“ unknown in the Mother Country, that is a position which is altogether without foundation, and positively and practically untrue.

“ In my opinion, when a proposition is submitted to this House, for the purpose of inducing the House to act upon it, care should be taken not to confound what is morally true, with what is historically false. Undoubtedly the spirit of the British Constitution is, in its principle, hostile to any modification of Slavery. But, as undoubtedly, the British Parliament has for ages tolerated, sanctioned, protected, and even encouraged a system of Colonial establishment of which it well knew Slavery to be the foundation,

“ In the same way God forbid that I should contend that the Christian Religion is favourable to Slavery; but I confess I feel a strong objection to the introduction of the name of Christianity, as it were, bodily into any Parliamentary question. Religion ought to control the acts, and regulate the consciences of Governments, as well as of individuals. But when it is put forward to serve a political purpose, however laudable, it is done, I think, after the example of ill times, and I cannot but remember the ill objects to which in those times such a practice was applied. Assuredly no Christian will deny that the spirit of the Christian Religion is hostile to Slavery, as it is to every abuse and

“ misuse of power. It is hostile to all deviations  
“ from rectitude, morality, and justice ; but if  
“ it be meant that in the Christian Religion  
“ there is a special denunciation against Slavery,  
“ that Slavery and Christianity cannot exist to-  
“ gether, I think the Honourable Gentleman  
“ himself must admit that the proposition is his-  
“ torically false. And again, I must say, that I  
“ cannot consent to the confounding, for a poli-  
“ tical purpose, what is morally true, with what  
“ is historically false. One peculiar character-  
“ istic of the Christian dispensation, if I must  
“ venture in this place upon such a theme, is  
“ that it has accommodated itself to all states of  
“ society, rather than that it has selected any  
“ particular state of society for the peculiar  
“ exercise of its influence. If it has added lustre  
“ to the sceptre of the Sovereign, it has equally  
“ been the consolation of the Slave. It applies  
“ to all ranks of life, to all conditions of  
“ men ; and the sufferings of this world, even to  
“ those upon whom they press most heavily, are  
“ rendered comparatively indifferent by the pros-  
“ pect of compensation in the world of which  
“ Christianity affords the assurance. True it  
“ generally is, that Christianity tends to elevate,  
“ not to degrade, the character of man ; but it is  
“ not true, in the specifick sense conveyed in  
“ the resolution. It is not true that there is  
“ that in the Christian Religion which makes it

“ impossible that it should co-exist with Slavery  
“ in the world. Slavery has been known in all  
“ times, and under all systems of Religion,  
“ whether true or false. *Non meus hic sermo* ;  
“ I speak but what others have written on this  
“ point; and I beg leave to read to the House  
“ a passage from Dr. Paley, which is directly  
“ applicable to the subject that we are dis-  
“ cussing : —

“ Slavery was a part of the civil constitution  
“ of most countries when Christianity appeared:  
“ yet no passage is to be found in the Christian  
“ Scriptures by which it is condemned and  
“ prohibited. This is true; for Christianity,  
“ soliciting admission into all nations of the  
“ world, abstained, as behoved it, from inter-  
“ meddling with the civil institutions of any.  
“ But, does it follow from the silence of Scrip-  
“ ture concerning them, that all the civil insti-  
“ tutions which then prevailed were right;  
“ or that the bad should not be exchanged for  
“ better? Besides this, the discharging of all  
“ slaves from all obligation to obey their mas-  
“ ters, which is the consequence of pronouncing  
“ slavery to be unlawful, would have had no  
“ better effect than to have let loose one half of  
“ mankind upon the other. Slaves would have  
“ been tempted to embrace a religion which as-  
“ serted their right to freedom; masters would  
“ hardly have been persuaded to consent to

“ “ claims founded upon such authority ; the  
“ “ most calamitous of all consequences, a *Bellum*  
“ “ *Servile*, might probably have ensued, to the re-  
“ “ proach, if not the extinction, of the Christian  
“ “ name. The truth is, the emancipation of  
“ “ Slaves should be gradual, and be carried on  
“ “ by the provisions of law, and under the  
“ “ protection of civil government. Christianity  
“ “ can only operate as an alterative. By the  
“ “ mild diffusion of its light and influence, the  
“ “ minds of men are insensibly prepared to per-  
“ “ ceive and correct the enormities which folly,  
“ “ or wickedness, or accident, have introduced  
“ “ into their public establishments. In this way  
“ “ the Greek and Roman Slavery, and since  
“ “ these the feudal tyranny, had declined before  
“ “ it. And, we trust, that as the knowledge  
“ “ and authority of the same religion advance  
“ “ in the world, they will abolish what remains  
“ “ of this odious institution.’

“ The Honourable Gentleman cannot wish  
“ more than I do,” continued Mr. Canning,  
“ that under this gradual operation, this widen-  
“ ing diffusion of light and liberality, the spirit  
“ of the Christian religion may effect all the  
“ objects he has at heart. But it seems to me  
“ that it is not, for the practical attainment of  
“ his objects, desirable that that which may be  
“ the influencing spirit, should be put forward  
“ as the active agent. When Christianity was

" introduced into the World, it took its root  
 " amidst the galling Slavery of the Roman Em-  
 " pire; more galling, in many respects (though  
 " not precisely of the same character), than that  
 " of which every friend of humanity complains.  
 " If the evils of this dreadful system neverthe-  
 " less gradually vanished, before the gentle but  
 " certain influence of Christianity, and if the  
 " great Author of the system trusted rather to  
 " this gradual operation of the principle than to  
 " any immediate or direct precept, I think, Par-  
 " liament would do more wisely rather to rely  
 " upon the like operation of the same principle,  
 " than to put forward the authority of Christian-  
 " ity, in at least a questionable shape."

The whole of this passage is most important: because in it Mr. Canning lays down general principles which will bear upon the subject so long as Slavery exists.

But although he " contended against the literal  
 " sense of the resolution, he was quite willing to  
 " admit that the spirit both of Christianity and  
 " the British Constitution was in favour of a  
 " gradual termination of this unquestioned evil,  
 " and he was therefore ready to proceed to all  
 " reasonable and practicable measures for that  
 " purpose."

With this view he agreed as to the expediency of adopting many of the details proposed by Mr. Buxton for ameliorating the condition of the

Slaves. But that this object might be effectually attained he thought that it had better be left in the hands of the executive Government. He therefore intended to move as an amendment three Resolutions \* similar in principle to Mr. Buxton's, but stated in more cool and considerate language, " so as to avoid the liability to misrepresentation."

If the House adopted them the Government would then act upon them both with respect to those Colonies which had independent Legislatures; and those, where none existed. With the latter the agency of the Crown would of course be more free and unfettered — but with the former, the Government had a right to expect the co-operation of the Colonial Legislatures; and if they resisted, not out of reason but con-

\* 1st. " That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in His Majesty's colonies.

2d. " That, through a determined and persevering, but at the same time judicious and temperate, enforcement of such measures, this House looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the slave population, such as may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of His Majesty's subjects.

3d. " That this House is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose, at the earliest period that shall be compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property."

macy, Ministers would not hesitate to come down to Parliament for counsel.

After a long debate, Mr. Buxton having consented to withdraw his resolution, Mr. Canning's amendment was unanimously carried, and was further ordered to be laid before the King.

The Government having thus given a pledge to Parliament to interfere with respect to the Slaves, at once set to work to redeem it. Lord Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies, sent a circular letter to all the Colonial Governors, enclosing a copy of Mr. Canning's speech and the resolutions which had been agreed to by the House of Commons — in order that the principles by which the Government intended to be guided might be generally understood throughout the West Indies.

The circular recommended the immediate and absolute prohibition to inflict the punishment of flogging on female slaves, and the disuse of the cart whip, even as an emblem of authority, in the field by the driver of the slaves, "lest it "should be employed as the ready instrument "of his displeasure."

This communication was received in the Colonies in the most unsatisfactory manner. The Colonists conceived that their property depended on the continuance of the system, and were averse therefore to the adoption of any measures calculated, as they maintained (or

believed), to effect its extinction. The House of Assembly in Jamaica were very intemperate *both in their acts and in their language*. They protested against the interference of the Imperial Parliament, and insinuated a charge of “pharisaical dictation” against those with whom it had originated. Although it is impossible not to condemn these hasty ebullitions of the Jamaica Assembly, yet it must not be forgotten that men condemned to live in the midst of such a state of Society as obtains in the West Indies, and who know that their own lives may be placed in jeopardy by too freely loosening the controul, which they possess over their Slaves, must view the subject with feelings very different from those which actuate the breasts of the abolitionists in England. Those individuals, far from all danger themselves, both as to their persons and property, can contemplate the question with the calm eye of philanthropy ; but in so doing they should make every allowance for the difficult, and cruel position in which their white fellow-subjects have been placed, not only by no fault, but not even by any acts of their own.

The events which immediately took place in the West Indies when the account of the debate in the House of Commons arrived sufficiently attest the erroneous notions entertained by Mr. Buxton. He had somewhat tauntingly brought forward the unfulfilled predic-

tions of insurrections, which had been put forth, on previous occasions when discussions respecting the Slaves had taken place in Parliament, confidently concluding from thence that similar anticipations would not in the present instance be realized. So far, however, was this from being the case, that the almost immediate consequence in Jamaica of the discussion was a conspiracy amongst the Slaves; and in Demerara, urged on by the notion that the King and Parliament had decreed their freedom, but that the knowledge of it was kept back from them, the negroes burst out into open rebellion. The reluctance, therefore, of the Colonial authorities to confer at that moment additional privileges on the Slaves is not perhaps to be wondered at; although it cannot be doubted but that the grant of those privileges was much more likely than coercion, to prevent for the future the like disturbances. Such indeed seemed to be the opinions entertained by the West Indian Body in London, by whom, in justice it must be stated, every disposition was manifested to facilitate the wishes of the Government.

The Ministers, although disappointed in their hopes of obtaining the co-operation of the Colonial Legislatures, did not abandon the work which they had undertaken. When Parliament met in the beginning of 1824 the question was noticed at length in the King's Speech, and shortly after

an Order in Council was framed, in which were embodied all those measures, which the Government considered as most essential for improving the condition of the Slave. On the 16th of March, this Order in Council and other papers on the subject were presented by Mr. Canning to the House \* ; on which occasion he rendered an account of what measures had been adopted by the Government in conformity with the spirit of the resolutions passed in the preceding year, at the same time pointing out the mode in which it contemplated that the Order above mentioned should be made to operate. That Order provided

1. " That the shocking and unseemly practice " of the chastisement of females by the whip " should be entirely abolished.
2. " That the whip, when applied to males, as " a stimulus to labour, should be wholly laid " aside.
3. " That by an enlarged Religious establish- " ment, there should be ample means for giving " the negroes religious instruction.
4. " That marriages amongst them should be " encouraged, and to this end, in all future sales, " families were not to be separated.
5. " That the security of law should be given " to that property which was before respected " by custom, and that measures should be taken

“ to secure to the Slave the power of bequeath-  
“ ing it at his death.

6. “ That in order to give time for religious  
“ instruction Sunday labour should be done away  
“ with, and the time allotted for Sunday markets  
“ should be immediately restricted, and ulti-  
“ mately the markets themselves discontinued.

7. “ That a negro who may have acquired  
“ sufficient property shall, under certain guards  
“ and regulations, be entitled to purchase his own  
“ freedom, the freedom of his wife, and that of  
“ his family.”

8. The evidence of Slaves (already admitted  
in some of the Islands) was to be admitted, when  
“ those persons who were to have the care of  
“ instructing them should certify, not with re-  
“ pect to a particular case in which the evidence  
“ of a Slave might be wanted, but generally, that.  
“ such and such Slaves had made such advances  
“ in civilization as to be cognizant of the nature  
“ of an oath : and that a register of these Slaves  
“ should be kept constituting, as it were, a pri-  
“ vileged class, and presenting something like  
“ an object of ambition to their fellow-slaves.”

Such were the provisions of this Order in  
Council, which were to be forthwith enforced by  
the authority of the Crown in those Colonies  
(Trinidad, St. Lucie, and Demerara,) which had  
not separate Legislatures ; while to those Colo-  
nies which possessed them, the Government

would strongly recommend the adoption of the measures enumerated in the Order. If the experiment succeeded in those Colonies where it was fairly tried, then it might confidently be anticipated that the other Colonies would not hold out long in opposition to a plan, which would thus be sanctioned by experience.

Of all of the regulations of the Order in Council, the West India Body in England approved, except that one which made purchased manumission compulsory on the owners. In this case, however, the Government were far behind what had been urged by Mr. Buxton in the name of the abolitionists in the preceding year. But Mr. Canning thought that the emancipation of the next generation of negroes would hardly be less unwise than the grant of emancipation to the existing one. "The Slave would view the " freedom which was thus placed in prospect " before him, as an infant views any object of " desire without the faculty of calculating the " distance which separates him from it. To " hold out the prospect for a future generation " might create dissatisfaction in the present race " of Slaves and render their actual existence in- " tolerable." The course which the " Govern- " ment proposed to pursue, was to arrive at the " liberation of the child through the instrumen- " ality of the parent. Enable the Negro to " purchase his own freedom — enable him

"equally to purchase that of his offspring—  
 "whenever he should have acquired the means of  
 "doing so; and the option between himself and  
 "his child being left to his own feelings, how pro-  
 "bable was it that those feelings might lead him  
 "to prefer the liberation of his child! On the  
 "contrary, if we were to take the rising genera-  
 "tion of Slaves or those hereafter to be born,  
 "under the special protection of the Legislature,  
 "as proposed by the honourable Member, parents  
 "might perhaps be tempted to look upon their  
 "offspring, with feelings, he would not say of  
 "envy, but with far other than those of unmixed  
 "satisfaction with which a parent ought to con-  
 "template the happiness and prosperity of his  
 "child.

"Immediate emancipation to the negro him-  
 "self would indeed be a fatal gift. To be safely  
 "enjoyed it must be gradually and diligently  
 "earned. *Haud facilem esse viam voluit*, is the  
 "condition under which it has pleased Divine  
 "Providence that all the valuable objects of  
 "human aspiration should be attained. To  
 "attempt to shorten the road between desire  
 "and attainment is nine times out of ten to go  
 "astray, and to miss altogether the wished for  
 "object.

"In dealing with the negro we must remem-  
 "ber," said Mr. Canning, "that we are dealing  
 "with a being possessing the form and strength of

" a man, but the intellect of a child. To turn him  
 " loose in the manhood of his physical strength,  
 " in the maturity of his physical passions, but in  
 " the infancy of his uninstructed reason, would be  
 " to raise up a creature resembling the splendid  
 " fiction of a recent romance ; the hero of which  
 " constructs a human form with all the corporeal  
 " capabilities of man, and with the thews and  
 " sinews of a giant ; but being unable to impart  
 " to the work of his hands a perception of right  
 " and wrong, he finds too late that he has only  
 " created a more than mortal power of doing  
 " mischief, and himself recoils from the monster  
 " which he has made.

" Such," he said, " would be the effect of a  
 " sudden emancipation before the negro was  
 " prepared for the enjoyment of well regulated  
 " liberty."

Mr. Canning then referred to the conduct of the House of Assembly in Jamaica, in a way well calculated to make the members ashamed of their violence, and to bring them to a better frame of mind. He wished not to irritate but to conciliate ; for he was well convinced that, " if the condition of the Slaves were to be improved, that improvement must be introduced through the medium of their Masters."

To disabuse the Slaves of the false notion which they had imbibed, that the King had decreed their freedom, a short proclamation was issued

to them, declaring that they would forfeit the King's protection, if, in consequence of any such false ideas, they refused to "render entire sub-mission to the Laws, and a dutiful obedience "to their Masters."

Mr. Canning concluded his speech by moving for leave to bring in a bill to make Slave Trading, Piracy.

A long debate took place after Mr. Canning had sat down, in the course of which the Abolitionists indulged in much irritating language, and complained that though with respect to the Colonies under the controul of the Crown, the Ministers had redeemed their pledge of the preceding Session, yet that with respect to the other Colonies they had wholly failed in so doing. No attempt however was made in the shape of an amendment to compel the Government to change its course, and Mr. Canning's motion was unanimously carried.

The question was not again agitated in the course of that year, although it was several times incidentally mentioned. A long debate, of two nights, took place with respect to the trial at Demerara, of a missionary of the name of Smith, who had been accused of having been privy to the rebellion. The guilt or innocence of the missionary being the main point in dispute, it may be easily imagined that the celebrity which the affair acquired, was more owing to

the discussions respecting it in Parliament, than to its own intrinsick importance.

In conformity with the declared intentions of the Government, the Order in Council was enforced before the end of the year (1824) in the Colonies which had not independent Legislatures, and was recommended to those that had. During the session of 1825 the question was not agitated; but in 1826 the little progress made by the Colonial Legislatures in complying with the recommendations contained in the Order in Council, excited the indignation of the anti-slavery party, who continued to procure incredible numbers of petitions from all parts of the Country, urging the Parliament to the adoption of more decisive measures. Several debates on different branches of the subject occurred in both Houses; but since Mr. Canning took no part in them, it will be unnecessary to notice them. On the motion of Mr. Brougham on the 29th of May, which embraced the whole question, and went to pledge the Legislature to deal coercively by the Colonies in the following session, if in the mean while they did not comply with the recommendations of the Government, Mr. Canning again raised his voice against precipitation, in order to procure for the Colonial Legislatures yet another trial, in the hope that they would at length cease to persevere in their resistance. Mr. Brougham's motion was rejected by a ma-

jority of 100 to 38. It was at the end of this session that the Parliament was dissolved. In the elections which ensued, the abolitionists called upon the electors to make the abolition of slavery the test by which their votes should be determined. The recommendation, however, was for the most part little attended to by the electors, and in the course of the Session which ensued, other matters of more pressing and immediate interest occupied the attention of Parliament. In this state, therefore, Mr. Canning left this important and difficult question, although he had the satisfaction to witness some approach towards concession on the part of the Colonial Legislatures, as well as the enforcement of the Order in Council, in the Crown Colonies.

Upon the whole, therefore, it appears, that every measure adopted by Mr. Canning, and every opinion and advice given by him, furnished evidence of his ardent desire for the *timely* abolition of slavery, and of the abhorrence with which he viewed the prospect of its perpetuation ; but Mr. Canning was a statesman, and not an enthusiast ; and being accustomed to contemplate masses of population with reference to the existing character, and circumstances of their incidental condition, he knew how much long preparation is often necessary before even an ameliorating change can be effected.

There were two material reasons for deferring the measure of emancipation. 1st, The then unfitness of the Negro population of the English Colonies to receive the boon of freedom proposed to be given to them. 2dly, That the Slave Trade was still carried on in other parts of the West Indies.

No rational man can contemplate a better lot for the Negroes, after emancipation, than that of the lower order of European common labourers. The most perfect success therefore of emancipation would be comprised, in the replacing of compulsory labour, by voluntary labour for hire. If the Negroes should make a different use of their freedom, the British Colonies would cease to be places of production, and great commercial derangement would ensue. At present the consumption of sugar in the United Kingdom is nearly equal to half the quantity sent to Europe. Our colonies not only supply our own consumption, but enable us to contribute largely to that of the Continent. If, then, the British colonies should cease to produce sugar, and we were, instead of furnishing any quantity to Europe, to be compelled to come, with our power of purchasing, upon the diminished share of the Continent for the whole of our own consumption, it is clear that for many years sugar would be a luxury attainable only by the highest classes, and the

body of the people would be totally deprived of an article, which has become to them one, second only to those of first necessity. We should thus inflict a great evil upon our own population at home, and annihilate four millions of revenue which would have to be made up by other taxes, while the colonies would be converted into a vast scene of devastation and horror. The high price of sugar, moreover, would give an enormous stimulus to the Slave Trade in other quarters, so that as far as the African Race itself was concerned the effect of British emancipation would be, to convert a million of orderly Negroes, now in a state of progressive improvement, into irreclaimable savages, and to cause their places as labourers, to be supplied by an importation elsewhere of another million of fresh slaves. What then would humanity gain by such a change as this? But even supposing that the Negroes did for the most part look for their support to the wages they might earn, submitting themselves peaceably to the government of the laws, their condition as work-people would be a very hard one if the foreign Slave Trade were continued. The evil of competition with Slave-trading Colonies is now borne by their masters; but if the land were cultivated by hired labourers, that evil would reach the workmen in the lowness of their wages. The

great reduction of prices of those articles of European manufactures, which are given in Africa in barter for Slaves, enables those people who continue the trade to procure Slaves for a very small sum in money ; and as the horrid practice of selecting chiefly males, and always the young and able, is well known, it must be obvious that the condition of a mixed population must be very miserable, when all are to be supported by the earnings of the proportion which is capable of labour, while the wages which their work can afford is determined by the price of its produce in a market supplied with similar produce by such competitors.

In order to escape, in the argument, from these consequences, we find the impatient Abolitionists endeavouring to shew that the Negro in a state of freedom will labour much more than he does as a Slave : a position strangely inconsistent with the idea of excessive labour now alleged to be extracted from him by compulsion. But it may well be feared that these are only the dreams of heated imaginations. Such visions never entered Mr. Canning's mind ; and every man capable of coolly examining the question in all its bearings, must perceive how much humanity may lose, if the time and the manner of effecting emancipation be not determined by sober judgment, and practical considerations. Above all things, emancipation

should be preceded by general and decided abolition.

A debate on a subject connected with our West Indian Colonies took place in the Session of 1827, which, as it belongs to this chapter rather than to any other, is therefore here introduced.

On the occasion of Dr. Lushington presenting a petition from the free people of Colour, in the West Indies, Mr. Canning made a short speech, in which he gave advice upon the state of the existing laws affecting that class of the population, which the governing part of the West Indian Community will do well to follow. It is indeed extraordinary, that being surrounded as the White Inhabitants of the West Indies are, with a black population, in the proportion of fourteen to one, and having it in their power to win to themselves by indulgence, and conciliation, a neutral race, which would diminish that proportion more than one half, yet that they should still allow that neutral species to be oppressed by unjust, and unequal laws. But so it is, and such is human nature in every part of the globe—the same in Ireland, and the same in the West Indies. For the feelings which induced the Irish Orangeman to oppose the grant of civil rights to his Catholick Fellow-countryman, and rendered him blind to the dangers of such a course, are the same as those

which operate upon the dominant whites of the West Indies to refuse civil privileges to the people of colour, on whose friendship, or enmity, their very existence, at no distant period, may depend.

It was well said, therefore, by Mr. Canning, that “it would be absolute madness in the “Whites, with their eyes open, not to conciliate “this class, and thereby gain a most important “acquisition. He would leave,” he said, “to “the Colonies the means of attaining this object “as fast as they could by a conquest of preju- “dice, — but he would exact from them the “removal of positive evil. In due time, if they “did not remove it themselves, it must be re- “moved for them.”

3. *North-West Coast of America.* — The Negotiations carried on under Mr. Canning’s directions on the subject of the North-West Coast of America, grew out of the Ukase, already mentioned \*, which was issued by the Russian Government in September 1821.

It appears that there were only three Powers who had any territorial claims on that Coast, — viz. Russia, Great Britain, and the United States. The Northern portion of the Coast was that claimed by Russia; the Southern, that by the United States; the division belonging to Great Britain lay between those of the other two

Powers. The exact limits of the territorial possessions of either of the three parties had never been accurately defined: although, in 1818, a convention was signed on the subject between Great Britain and the United States, by which the settlement of their respective territorial boundaries was adjourned for a period of ten years, during which time the navigation of the Coast, and of the rivers within the whole Country, was to be free and open to the vessels and subjects of the two contracting Powers. This convention was only made to prevent disputes between the British, and Americans, an express declaration being inserted in it, that it was not meant to affect the claims of any other Power or State to any part of the said territory. The importance of these Coasts consisted in their extensive fisheries, and the trade in furs, which was carried on with the inhabitants — advantages which up to this time had been common to the three Powers. The most southern Settlement of Russia on the coast, or rather on an island close by the coast, was Sitka, in latitude 57° N.

This was the position of affairs when the Ukase in question made its appearance; in which document the Emperor of Russia indirectly asserted an exclusive right of sovereignty from Behring's Straits to the 51st degree of North latitude, on the West Coast of America, and to the 45th de-

gree North on the opposite coast of Asia ; and (as a qualified exercise of that right) prohibited all foreign ships, under pain of confiscation, from approaching within one hundred Italian miles of those coasts.

By this Ukase, therefore, Russia appropriated to herself many degrees of latitude, in which were actually established posts, belonging to the servants of the British Hudson's Bay Company ; extended Her territorial rights over the adjacent seas to an unprecedented distance, and closed a previously unobstructed passage (Behring's Straits) at the very moment when it happened to be the object of important discoveries for the promotion of the general commerce and navigation of the World.

Immediately on the Ukase being communicated to Lord Castlereagh by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires his Lordship protested against its enactments, and requested such amicable explanations, as might tend to reconcile the pretensions of Russia with the just rights of the King, and the interests of his subjects. Little progress was made in these explanations before that Minister's death ; but nevertheless the Russian Government gave directions to its officers not to carry into execution the orders prescribed by the Ukase.

When the duty of settling the question devolved upon Mr. Canning, he felt that Great

Britain could not consistently with Her dignity or Her interests require less from Russia than some publick disavowal of pretensions so offensive, which had been at once ill advisedly, and ostentatiously put forth; but since the Russian Government had bound itself to waive entirely the practical exercise of the maritime rights asserted in the Ukase, at the same time that it manifested a desire to settle the question amicably, there was every disposition on the part of the British Cabinet to consult the feelings of the Emperor of Russia, and provided the recantation was made, to agree to its being made in the way most agreeable to His Imperial Majesty.

With this view it was, that when in June 1823 the Government of the United States expressed its desire to bring forward with Great Britain, some joint proposition for the settlement of this question with Russia, Mr. Canning was quite willing to establish this concert, so far as related to the maritime part of the question, conceiving, that Great Britain and the United States might be satisfied ~~singly~~, with smaller concessions than either Power ~~could~~ accept singly, if the demands of the other were likely to be higher than its own. It was not till near the end of 1823, that the Ministers of the United States, at London, and St. Petersburgh, received their instructions upon the subject. It then appeared that the

notion of co-operation entertained by the American Government extended to the territorial, as well as maritime, division of the question. Mr. Canning had never contemplated such an union, and was indisposed to consent to it: but when the territorial pretensions of the United States, as *Assignees* of Spain, under the Treaty of Washington, turned out to be nearly as inadmissible as those, advanced by the Russian Ukâse, the inexpediency of a joint negotiation so far as territory was concerned, became no longer doubtful; for, as has been already stated, our convention with the United States in 1818, settled the question for the then succeeding ten years, so that it had at this period (1824-25) of these negotiations some years to run. To have thrown that convention loose would have been wantonly to have added to the embarrassments of the question, which so far as we were at that moment concerned had reference only to Russia. But independently of these considerations, there was betrayed on the part of the United States a secret partiality for the Russian side of the question, ill adapted for the purposes of joint negotiation. Mr. Canning therefore resolved to deal separately with Russia, so far at least as related to the arrangement of limits.

With respect to the maritime part of the question, a circumstance which occurred about the same time led to a similar conclusion.

In the Speech of the President of the United States at the opening of Congress in December 1823, it was laid down as a principle, that the United States prohibited any further attempt by European Powers at colonization in America. This novel and extraordinary doctrine at first seemed intended as a set-off against the equally untenable propositions on the subject of maritime rights put forth by Russia in Her Ukase of 1821. But, the mere fact of the President having put it forth, no longer left Great Britain and the United States upon the same footing with regard to Russia; and therefore furnished a conclusive reason for our not mixing ourselves in a negotiation between two Parties, whose opposite pretensions were so extravagant in their several ways, "as to be the subject, not so much of practical adjustment, as of reciprocal disavowal."

It was for these reasons that Mr. Canning instructed Sir Charles Bagot, our ambassador in Russia, to treat alone with the Imperial Government.

The principal object of the negotiation was to obtain a recorded disavowal from Russia of the maritime pretensions advanced in the Ukase. And then (but this was a secondary consideration) to settle some line of demarcation between the respective territories of the two countries, the settlement of which would furnish

the Russian Government with a fitting opportunity for making the disavowal in question.

On the first point the Russian Ministers professed to entertain no difficulty; all therefore that it was necessary to do was to decide upon the mode of dividing the territory. For this end it was agreed, as the basis on which the negotiation should be conducted, that the claims of strict right should be provisionally waived by both Parties, and that the adjustment should be made upon the sole principle of their mutual convenience. That, of Great Britain, on the one hand, required the posts on the Continent belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, the embouchures of such rivers as afforded an outlet for the British trade into the Pacifick, and the two banks of the Mackenzie River; on the other, that of Russia induced Her to wish to secure to Herself Her Fisheries upon the islands and shores of the North-West Coast, and the posts which she might have already established on them. Notwithstanding that upon this basis there seemed little probability of any difficulties arising, the first propositions brought forward by Sir Charles were ~~not~~ accepted by Russia, and His Excellency was compelled to apply to His Government for a more extended discretion.

Shortly after Sir Charles had for this purpose suspended the negotiations, the American Mini-

ster, Mr. Middleton, succeeded in bringing those, with which he was charged, to a termination. By the first and second articles of the convention thus concluded, it was mutually agreed that the navigation of the Pacifick Ocean should be free to both parties, as well as that both should possess the right of approaching the coasts, upon points which had not then been occupied, for the purpose of trading with the natives; but that on any point where there existed a Russian establishment, the citizens of the United States should not approach, without the permission of the Governor or Commander. By Article 4., however, this restriction was wholly suspended for ten years, during which time the subjects of both Powers were to have uninterrupted access for the purpose of trade (excepting in arms and ammunition) to their respective possessions.

By Article 3. Russia bound herself not to form any establishment lower than  $54^{\circ} 40'$  North, and the United States not higher than that parallel of latitude.

The boundaries desired by Russia beyond what Sir Charles had been authorized to agree to, did not in any way materially affect the interests of this Country. He was therefore instructed to consent, with some trifling modifications, to the line of demarcation for which Russia contended. But in return for this concession on the part of Great Britain, certain points as to the navigation

of Behring's Straits, and as to privileges of trading, were to be stipulated for, which had not been contemplated in former discussions, but nevertheless were not considered to be of a nature at all unfavourable to Russian interests. Upon these points, however, the negotiation was broken off. Whether the complaints of the Russian Company against the convention with America made the Plenipotentiaries more difficult to please, or whatever else might be the cause, they remained inflexible; and Sir Charles Bagot, who was about to return to England, was allowed to quit St. Petersburgh, in the beginning of September 1824, without the conclusion of any definitive arrangement. This, however, was not a state of things with which Great Britain could remain contented. The indefinite postponement of an adjustment of the territorial limits was a matter of little moment; but the settlement of the maritime part of the question She could not submit much longer to defer.

Mr. Stratford Canning was therefore sent, shortly after Sir Charles Bagot's return, on a special mission to St. Petersburgh for the purpose of bringing to a speedy conclusion these long protracted discussions.

Mr. Stratford Canning was instructed to propose such alterations as were in accordance with those views of Russia, which were reasonable. If, however, the Russian Plenipotentiaries should

continue to be dissatisfied with the propositions of Great Britain, Mr. Stratford Canning was to be at liberty to agree to an article stipulating to negotiate hereafter respecting the territorial limits; but Mr. Canning considered it essential that Russia should in some way repeal "Her "unjustifiable arrogation of exclusive jurisdiction over an Ocean of unmeasured extent;" which if the Russian Government would not do, then Great Britain would resort to some mode of recording in the face of the world Her protest, against the pretensions of the Ukase of 1821, and of effectually securing Her own interests against the possibility of its future operations.

For such protest, however, there was fortunately no occasion. On the 28th of February 1825, Mr. Stratford Canning signed with the Russian Plenipotentiaries a Convention, of which the following is the outline.

The first two Articles were in every respect similar to the first two, already described, as being in the convention between Russia and the United States. The third, laid down the line of demarcation, which was to commence from the Southernmost point of Prince of Wales's Island in  $54^{\circ} 40'$  N. latitude, between the 131st and 133d degree of W. longitude, and to ascend to the North along Portland channel, as far as the point of the Continent where it would strike the 56th degree of N. latitude; thence it was to

follow the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the Coast, as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of W. longitude, and thence along that meridian line was to be prolonged to the Frozen Ocean.

The 4th Article, explained the third, as giving the whole of Prince of Wales's Island to Russia; and when the summit of the mountains should exceed ten marine leagues from the Coast, then the boundary was to be formed by a line, drawn parallel to the windings of the Coast at the distance of ten marine leagues.

The 5th Article bound the two contracting Parties not to form establishments within the limits respectively assigned to the possessions of the other.

The 6th gave to Great Britain the privilege of navigating freely all the rivers and streams which in their course towards the Pacific, might cross the strip of land on the Coast assigned to Russia.

The 7th mutually conceded the right of trading with the respective possessions of each other for a period of ten years.

The 8th opened the port of Sitka to the commerce and vessels of British subjects for the same period, and provided that in case an extension of the term be granted to any other Power, the same extension should be granted to Great Britain.

The four remaining Articles regulate some minor points which are not of sufficient importance to be detailed.

By this Convention Great Britain secured for Herself, as far as Russia was concerned, all that was important for Her commercial interests.

The question with the United States had during the whole period of these negotiations been made the subject-matter of elaborate discussion between the respective Plenipotentiaries of the two Powers. The negotiators, however, did not succeed in arriving at any practical result, and the matter was left unsettled. But the period (1828) approaching, when the provisions of the Convention of 1818, were to cease and determine, it became necessary to arrange something; and accordingly a new Convention was signed in London, in August 1827, indefinitely extending and continuing in force the Convention of 1818, each party being at liberty to put an end to such indefinite extension, by giving due notice of twelve months of their wish to abrogate the stipulations of the new one.

The details of these discussions with the United States are for obvious reasons omitted. Nevertheless, one circumstance which occurred in the course of them it is right to mention.

The Plenipotentiary of the United States reasserted the extravagant principle already men-

tioned as put forth by the President, that no part of the American Continent was thenceforward to be open to colonization from Europe.

The truth and justness of this principle the British Plenipotentiaries utterly denied ; and they recorded their denial in the Protocol of the same Conference, in which this principle had been insisted upon by the United States.

## CHAP. XV.

WESTERN EUROPE.—STATE OF SPAIN.—DIPLOMATICK TRANSACTIONS WITH THE COURT OF MADRID.—CUBA.—CHANGE OF MINISTRY.—SIR CHARLES STUART'S PROCEEDINGS AT RIO DE JANEIRO.—DEATH OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL.—GRANT OF A CONSTITUTIONAL CHARTER BY DON PEDRO.—ITS RECEPTION IN PORTUGAL, AND IN EUROPE.—INVASION OF PORTUGAL FROM SPAIN.—BRITISH TROOPS SENT TO PORTUGAL.—MR. CANNING'S SPEECH ON THAT OCCASION, AND ITS EFFECTS.—CONDITION OF PORTUGAL AT MR. CANNING'S DEATH.

WE must now return to the affairs of Western Europe, and in the first place to those of Spain, the condition of which country at the close of 1824 was not the least improved from what it was at the end of the preceding year.

It has been already mentioned that on the death of M. Casa Irujo, who succeeded the Duque del Infantado, that the Condé d'Ofalia, who wished to act moderately, was placed at the

head of the Administration. But the moderation of M. Ofalia was counteracted by the violence of M. Calomarde, who from being Secretary to the Council of Castile, was nominated to the Department of grace and justice, by the influence of M. Ugarte, an individual who ~~at~~ that time enjoyed the highest personal favour of the King. The King at first gave his countenance to M. Ofalia, who was, however, obliged to make concessions to the violent Party, by acts of occasional severity, at the same time that he was pressing the publication of the long-talked of amnesty. These concessions, however, did not gain for him the support of that party, all the members of which were leagued together to procure his dismissal. For this end they assured the King that insurrections would take place in all parts of the Country if any amnesty were granted; and the Curé, Merino, and the Baron d'Erolles still continued at the head of their armies, bidding defiance to the Government, and ready to execute the threats of the ultra party. The King, thus intimidated, gave but lukewarm support to M. Ofalia; and although that Minister was aided with respect to the amnesty by the French Ambassador, that act of mercy did not appear; and Ferdinand left Madrid (March 27. 1824) for Aranjuez not only without its promulgation, but preceded by a fulminating decree, banishing near 300 persons

from the latter place. A general idea prevailed when this decree was published, that another of even a still more proscriptive nature was about to be issued, and it is certain that it had been determined to remove from the capital the French Troops, under the command of General Bourmont, with the consent of that General, but without the knowledge of the French Ambassador. That Ambassador, seeing the system of proscription which was preparing, forthwith remonstrated with the King, with respect both to these plans and the proposed removal of the troops: the result was, that both measures were abandoned, and the promise of the amnesty renewed. Shortly after, the Conspiracy of the Queen of Portugal and Don Miguel exploded at Lisbon. It was believed that this plot was not without extensive ramifications in Spain; and the King, fearing that his brother Don Carlos, and his friends, might imitate the example of their common sister, the Queen of Portugal, and their common nephew Don Miguel, at last allowed to be published an amnesty, which was nevertheless of so vague a description that it admitted of a very limited, or a very extended, application. Such as it was, however, the ultras were indignant at it, and the predicted disturbances took place in various parts of the Kingdom. Don Victor Saez and others, supposed to be implicated in these

members, were sent away from Madrid by the influence of M. Ofalia. But on the other hand, the Minister of Grace and Justice, M. Calomarde, busily employed himself in defeating the object of the amnesty, by giving official notifications to individuals in confinement, who had a right to benefit by it, that they would be immediately brought to trial. The French Ambassador protested against these proceedings; and the enemies of M. Ofalia were unceasing in their representations to the King that he was too much under the influence of France. Not long after he had signed \* a Treaty with the French Ambassador for the continuance of the occupation of Spain with French Troops for another six months, it became evident from the appearance of a proclamation limiting the amnesty, and other violent measures, that the influence of M. Ugarte and M. Calomarde over the King was prevailing to the destruction of that of M. Ofalia.

Accordingly, on the 12th of July, a decree was issued dismissing this latter Minister, banishing him to Almeira, and appointing as his successor M. Zea de Bermudez, who three months before had been sent as Minister to St. Petersburg, but who had subsequently been accredited to the Court of London.

It is unnecessary to detail the various miserable intrigues and cabals, which preceded and followed this change of Ministry. Suffice it to say, that M. Zea de Bermudez, when he assumed the direction of affairs, followed nearly in the footsteps of M. Ofalia, and was somewhat more successful in infusing moderation into the Royal counsels. He therefore was likewise supported by the French Ambassador. Before the end of the year the exiled Constitutionalists made an attack on the Spanish Coasts, which completely failed ; and the King, between dread of the Constitutional party, who would have left no power in his hands, and the violent ultras, who would have placed Don Carlos on the Throne, supported with something like cordiality the new Minister.

At the end of six months from the date of the former convention a new one was signed with France, for the continuance of the French troops in Spain for an indefinite period.

At the commencement of the following year (1825) the recognition of the Spanish American States by Great Britain took place : the long discussions on which subject between the Spanish and British Governments were closed by Mr. Canning's note to M. de Los Rios of the 25th of March. The Court of Madrid did not think proper to accept the offer of the good offices of His Majesty, for the purpose of bringing about a

conciliatory arrangement with its late colonial dependencies ; but it did not reject the advice with which that offer was accompanied, to forbear further controversy upon a matter which was then irrevocably decided.

So long as the discussions relating to that subject continued between Great Britain and Spain, all other official correspondence between the two Nations was paralyzed, and perplexed.

Early in the summer of 1825, Mr. Frederick Lamb proceeded to Madrid in the character of Minister Plenipotentiary, the diplomatick business of Great Britain having been carried on by Mr. Bosanquet, as Chargé d'Affaires, after the departure of Sir William à Court for Lisbon, in the autumn of 1824.

The two points which Mr. Lamb \* was directed to urge upon the Spanish Government as requiring speedy settlement were those which arose, 1st, Out of the violation of Treaties which had been in force for centuries, but to which Spain had been too much in the habit of refusing a faithful execution ; 2dly, Out of the non-fulfilment of the convention of 1823.

Under the first head, the grounds of complaint which this Country had against Spain were for a series of infractions of the rights and privileges secured by antient treaties to British merchants

\* 2d May, 1825.

resident in that Kingdom, from the year 1814 to 1823 ; and so far from any disposition having been shewn to redress those grievances, there rather appeared to have grown up since the last-mentioned year, a more obstinate determination, at once to violate the letter of treaties, and to outrage the feelings of British subjects, who were entitled to appeal to those treaties for protection.

The very attempt at justification of these proceedings, which the Spanish Government put forward turned wholly on what it alleged to be the unreasonable inequality of the subsisting treaties in favour of Great Britain ; and on a claim to the negotiation of new stipulations conceived in a spirit of equality and fairness.

But to this the British Government answered, that it was at all times ready to revise the existing system, and to substitute for it one more analogous to the advanced knowledge of the true principles of commerce, which had of late years prevailed. Until, however, such new system should be established, Great Britain had a right to claim the benefit of the one which was then in existence ; and it was not because her Government were willing to negotiate anew, that therefore it was prepared, when not a single step had been taken towards such negotiation, to consider all that was established as abrogated and null.

If the Spanish Ministers would point out the

modifications which they wished to introduce in the existing commercial relations between the two Countries, the British Minister would be instantly authorized to enter upon a revision of them with a view to a more enlarged and liberal system; but while the treaties were in force, Great Britain would insist upon the execution of them, and was not to be drawn from that claim by generalities, which might be barren of any particular results.

Such were the sentiments of the British Government before 1823; and these were sentiments which could not be otherwise than confirmed by what had taken place since the establishment of French Garrisons in Spain. For it appeared in more instances than one that the French had repelled by violence the impositions of Spanish authorities, which had been enforced by those authorities against British subjects.

With regard to the convention, the Spanish Commissioners, who had been appointed under the pretence of settling the claims of British subjects, had apparently been directed to obstruct rather than to forward the business of the Commission. Mr. Canning therefore earnestly exhorted the Spanish Government to weigh well what was the state of things in which that Convention originated, “ to recollect that it rather “ suspended than annulled the instructions given “ to His Majesty’s Naval Commanders in the

“ West Indies, and to implore the Spanish Government to consider well of all the consequences to which such a palpable breach of faith in so recent a transaction might lead.”

It may be well here to mention, that Mr. Simon Cock about this period was engaged in a negotiation with the Spanish Government for a compromise of the claims of British Subjects under the convention ; the conditions of which were the payment of a sum of money *en bloc* in liquidation of those claims.

To such an arrangement of this protracted transaction the British Government had no objection ; provided, 1st, That all the claimants concurred in expressing their wish for the compromise ; 2dly, That in point of fact it would accelerate, and secure payment. But the British Government would not make the proposal ; and although if made, either by the Spanish Government, or the claimants, and accepted by the party to whom the proposal was made, the British Government would not oppose any difficulty in the way of it ; yet that abstinence from opposition would only be on condition of care being taken, in the event of the compromise being agreed to, and executed, that the claimants should not reproach their Government with having curtailed the payments to which they were severally entitled ; or in the more probable case of the compromise, although agreed to, not

being executed, that the right of the British Government to insist upon the literal execution of the convention should not be impaired.

At the time when Mr. Canning was directing the Spanish Government to be pressed to claim redress for infraction of ancient Treaties, he was not unaware of the complaints which the Spanish Government preferred in return on account of the violation of the Spanish Revenue Laws, and of the contraband trade carried on by British subjects. On this topick, therefore, he addressed a circular note to our Consuls in Spain, warning them to be cautious not to encourage persons in violating the fiscal laws of Spain; and he directed this circular to be communicated to the Spanish Minister, as a proof of the friendly disposition of the British Government.

When Mr. Lamb arrived at Madrid, he found M. Zea de Bermudez apparently well disposed to redress the grievances of British subjects on commercial matters. But the negotiations with Mr. Cock suspended, for a time, the discussions between the two Governments on the subject of the convention. While M. Zea expressed the readiness of his Government to give satisfaction for the various grievances of which this Country had to complain, he manifested a great distrust of its friendly feelings towards Spain — asserting that London was the focus of an extensive conspiracy, and that practices un-

friendly to Spain were suffered to prevail at Gibraltar. The practices of which M. Zea complained may be divided into two classes : —

1st, Those which related to Smuggling ;  
2dly, Those which related to the harbouring of Refugee Spaniards.

Now with regard to the first, although it was undoubtedly true that Smuggling was carried on to a great extent on the coast of Spain, and it was idle to pretend that British capital did not enter for something into that contraband trade, or that the harbour of Gibraltar contributed nothing to its facility ; yet it was equally idle to assume that British capital created the contraband trade, or that it had arisen for the first time out of the then existing circumstances of Gibraltar, or out of the then existing political condition of Spain.

Such a trade had always existed in a greater or less degree on all the coasts of Spain, on the coasts of the Mediterranean, and in the immediate neighbourhood of Gibraltar more perhaps than in other parts, because the opportunities of harbours and the facilities of navigation were greater than in the bay of Biscay. But even there, and in other parts of Spain far without the reach of the influence of Gibraltar, the like irregularities prevailed ; and the frontier between Spain and Portugal was a scene of similar fraud on the Spanish revenue.

The fundamental fault lay in the fiscal regulations of Spain. Those even of this country, strengthened as they had been by recent improvements, with the coasts watched by ships and guarded by patrols, were not able to exclude a contraband trade in articles on which the duty was so high, as to compensate for the risk.

If such a trade were suppressed, the consequence would probably be that a wholesome and more gainful trade would supply its place, in which British Capital would find better and safer employment.

Great Britain therefore had no interest in the violation of the fiscal laws of Spain; but smuggling was not a crime which she could repress generally by legal punishment, nor could she keep up a maritime police on the coast of Spain.

As for the countenance, or aid supposed to be given to exiled Spaniards in their machinations against their Country, the charge brought by Spain was general, and therefore could only be opposed by general denial.

Mr. Canning denied "peremptorily and positively that any such aid or countenance had been given." And further he opposed to the vague charge specifick instances in which the British Government had thwarted the projects of the exiles. And still further, when Mr. Canning called for specifications of particular cases

in which the like machinations had been overlooked, or encouraged, they had been either refused by the Spanish Government, or, if given, had been found to be altogether erroneous. "But nevertheless," said Mr. Canning, "I again invite specifications of any particular cause of complaint, and I engage on the part of the Government of which I am a member, that if any specifick charge can be preferred, the most scrupulous investigation shall be instituted."

The refusal of the British Consul at Tangiers to surrender some Spaniards who took refuge, not only without his invitation but against his will, was cited by M. Zea as an instance of unfriendly conduct towards Spain.

"I am sorry," observed Mr. Canning in answer to this complaint, "that this conduct should be so considered, because we can hold out no expectation of any other conduct, in any future similar case.

"The surrender of Political Offenders to punishment (even though that punishment should be short of death) was no part of the duty of Governments towards each other, except when expressly stipulated by treaty; no such stipulation existed between Great Britain and Spain, nor would the British Government contract such an obligation with Spain, or any other Power: nor could a British Consul in Morocco assume to himself a power which the

“ British Government could not have exercised  
“ in Great Britain.

“ It ought to be some consolation to the  
“ Spanish Ministers to reflect, that when the  
“ party now predominant in Spain were humbled  
“ into exile by their political opponents, an  
“ asylum was afforded them at Gibraltar, and  
“ in other parts of His Majesty’s dominions, in  
“ spite of remonstrances quite as loud as those,  
“ with which those then in power were pursued  
“ by their successful rivals.

“ In the fierceness of civil contest, the thirst  
“ of vengeance, and the rigour of proscription,  
“ rage on one side, and on the other, with a  
“ violence unknown in the struggles of open  
“ war.

“ It is the business of neutral and friendly  
“ Powers to soften rather than to inflame those  
“ angry passions ; at least it is not their business  
“ to minister to their gratification by giving up  
“ the refugees.

“ Was the Spanish Government,” asked Mr. Canning, “ when it complained of our conduct  
“ to the exiled and proscribed Spaniards, aware  
“ of the excessive inconvenience to which those  
“ Exiles and proscriptions exposed the British  
“ Government? Did it know that these outcasts  
“ thronged our streets and besieged the doors  
“ of the Goverment Offices not for arms, but  
“ for bread? Did it know that they were literally

“ starving before our eyes? That private liber-  
 “ ality had been exhausted in their behalf, and  
 “ that there were no more funds at the disposal of  
 “ the Government to relieve them ?

“ And did it really expect that Great Britain  
 “ would at once find support for all the wretch-  
 “ edness, which the policy of the Spanish Go-  
 “ vernment might cast upon her shores, and at  
 “ the same time be responsible that this wretched-  
 “ ness did not ferment into acts of desperation ?  
 “ Great Britain could undertake no such re-  
 “ sponsibility.”

In this case indeed, as well as in that of smuggling, it was fitting that Spain should do something for herself. “ A *real* amnesty might  
 “ recall these unfortunate men, with their still  
 “ more unfortunate wives and children, or at  
 “ least would render their continued expatriation  
 “ their own fault.”

For the rest, if the Spanish Ministers required that the British Government should disavow any desire to foment civil war in Spain, the only difficulty, to making that disavowal in the most formal and solemn manner, arose from the feeling “ that the design was one which  
 “ ought not to be lightly imputed, and the dis-  
 “ avowal one which ought not to be exacted  
 “ from a Government, which had for so long  
 “ proved itself the friend of Spain.”

Besides these discussions between the two

Governments there was yet another subject of still more importance, respecting which the Government of Spain manifested very considerable anxiety.

It will be remembered that at one period of the negotiations on the subject of Spanish America between the Courts of London and Madrid, the former offered to guarantee to the Mother Country the important colony of Cuba, against any *external* aggression, on the condition of Spain consenting to negotiate with her Colonies, as she had done before, on the basis of independence.

This offer was not accepted, the advice of Russia being preferred, and the obstinacy of the King of Spain being invincible.

But although the Spanish Government would not purchase the secure possession of Cuba at the price of an acknowledgement of the irrecoverable loss which Spain had sustained in Her trans-Atlantick continental Colonies, Her Ministers were not without their alarms for the safety of this insular dependency. Of France they had, however, no fear; nor had they any of the designs of the United States of North America to get possession of Cuba for their own sakes. The positive assurances of the American Government forbade any such suspicion. Still, however, Spain felt that although for their own aggrandizement the United States

would abstain from any attempt to possess themselves of Cuba, the attempt might yet be made to thwart, or to forestall, the supposed ambitious views of Great Britain. The Spanish Ministers were therefore anxious to obtain from Great Britain a guarantee, which would afford the best proof to the United States that such ambitious views were not, in the remotest degree, within the contemplation of her Government.

It is singular enough that while the Spanish Government were thus dreading the loss of Cuba, from the unprovoked aggression of two Powers with whom Spain remained on terms of amity and peace, that it should have overlooked entirely the only really imminent danger arising from the attack of the only Power with which it was at war, viz. the New States of Spanish America. But on that subject the impatience of the King of Spain was so vehement, that it was absolutely necessary for his Ministers, in order to obtain a hearing from him upon any other matter connected with the well-being of his dominions, to keep that one out of sight.  
" This necessity in effect excluded the discussion which he solicited with respect to Cuba — " since the principal element of the difficulties " with which that island was beset, arose from " its situation relatively to the New States of " Spanish America, and the only chance of finding a solution for those difficulties was by con-

“sidering the question in connexion with those  
“States.”

“The fact of Cuba being the dépôt, of what-  
“ever military means Spain might have the ca-  
“pacify to collect for carrying on the war  
“against her former Colonies, and being the  
“most formidable position from which an attack  
“against those Colonies could be directed, en-  
“dangered its safety full as much as the possible  
“want of power in the Government at the  
“Havannah, either to ensure internal tranquil-  
“lity or to make itself respected on the coasts,  
“and in the seas which surround the island ;  
“and from the plea, or pretext, which might  
“thereby be afforded to other Nations either  
“for a partial occupation of the ports or shores  
“of Cuba, or for a direct interference in case  
“of any disturbance or struggle within the  
“island.”

To these latter causes of danger the Court of Madrid seemed sufficiently alive. But to the danger of attack from the New States of Spanish America His Catholick Majesty's Ministers were either wholly insensible, or else they felt themselves bound to abstain from bringing the means of averting it under the view of their Sovereign.

It was impossible, however, for the British Government, in estimating the evils which menaced Cuba, to forget that that island be-

longed to a Power at war; and in canvassing the "dangers arising out of a state of war, it "was but reasonable to consider of the re- "medies by which they might be obviated," especially when the continued existence of this particular danger, enhanced the others against which the Court of Madrid professed its desire to provide — first, by multiplying the chances of such internal commotion in Cuba, as might afford to foreign Powers the pretence for interfering in the local concerns of the Colony; and, secondly, by holding out a plausible occasion for them to make an offer of friendly military occupation as a defence against hostile attack.

As for Great Britain, "she disclaimed in the "most solemn manner any the remotest design, "or desire, to occupy Cuba, and to appropriate "that or any other of the Spanish Possessions "to herself. But she could not see with in- "difference any attempts by other Powers who "were like herself in amity with Spain, to assume "under whatever colour) that occupation of "Cuba, which for herself she disclaimed any "desire to obtain.

"The earnest wish of the British Govern- "ment was that Cuba and its dependencies "should remain in allegiance to the Mother "Country."

The Government of the United States, as well as that of France, had both disclaimed any de-

sign or desire to take Cuba to themselves ; and Mr. Canning had it in contemplation to propose to those two Powers to bind themselves interchangeably with England not to take advantage of the difficulties of Spain, to effect an occupation of Cuba for any purpose, or under any pretext whatever.

Such an obligation contracted by the three greatest maritime Powers of the World would have formed the strongest guarantee of Cuba to Spain against any proceedings of those three Powers.

Against the other species of danger, — the efforts of the Continental States of Spanish America, — security was only to be obtained by an armistice, if the obstinacy of the Spanish counsels and character made peace impossible.

The history of Spain herself furnished an example, in which similar obstinacy was soothed, and the miseries of war alleviated by a long cessation of hostilities. An armistice was agreed upon between Spain and the Netherlands in the year 1609, but the final recognition of the United Provinces was not conceded by Spain till 1648. And although the truce was not unbroken, during the whole of that interval, yet a vast expenditure of blood and treasure was saved even by that temporary cessation.

In this case, therefore, Spain hearkened to the voice of wisdom, and humanity, and consented

to suspend the assertion of her authority by arms, even before absolute necessity prescribed her final abdication of it.

What Spain did for herself in 1609, she advised England to do in 1779, when she proffered her good offices between the then revolted Colonies of Great Britain and the Mother Country; and proposed a truce without any abandonment of their mutual pretensions, until both parties should be willing to negotiate a peace.

Why therefore should His Catholick Majesty repudiate the example of His Royal Predecessor in 1609? Why should he refuse to act himself upon counsel given by His Royal Father to England in a case so nearly similar? True, England did not act upon that counsel; but she did not, by rejecting it, recover her Colonies.

The British Government was willing to undertake to make a proposition for a truce to the New States of America, either for an indefinite or for an expirable period, but liable to be renewed, and would do its utmost to procure its acceptance.

The evil to Spain of discontinuing hostilities was not very obvious, she was the assailed, and not the assailing, party; and her coasts were infested by the privateers of the new States, which swept the small remnant of her commerce from the face of the seas. For England to have undertaken to guarantee Cuba to Spain was then

out of the question. When the offer was made in 1824, it was on the condition that Spain should declare her readiness to negotiate with her late Colonies on the basis of independence. Such guarantee would have been a measure of strict neutrality, because if Great Britain had required of the colonies abstinence from an attack on Cuba, she required from Spain not to withhold the grant of independence, and not to persevere in hostilities whereby alone the attack would have been justified.

It was plain, therefore, that unless Spain accepted the condition (which she declined doing), a guarantee of Cuba in the then position of affairs would have been the act, not of a mediator but an ally defending one party against the legitimate hostility of the other.

Such was the view taken by Mr. Canning of these three subjects,—Smuggling—Refugees—and Cuba; but the Court of Madrid seemed resolutely determined not to change their own. Nevertheless the Spanish Ministers were not indisposed to revise the laws which regulated the commercial intercourse with Great Britain; but then they hoped to purchase from her political advantages for Spain, at the expense of the new States, in return for commercial privileges conceded to British Subjects. But this was a course utterly out of the power of Great Britain to

follow. Since her recognition of the new States she could only look upon their rights as established, as far as she was concerned, on an equal footing with those of any other independent Power.

In respect to the Spanish refugees at Gibraltar, the request to be furnished with specifick proofs only excited irritation; which was however somewhat allayed by the proclamation of the Governor of that fortress, by which it was proved that the British Government meant neither to allow of persecution on the one hand, nor of conspiracy against the Spanish Government on the other.

On the subject of Cuba the prospect of any such tripartite agreement as Mr. Canning had suggested could not but be agreeable to Spain; but as to purchasing the safety of Cuba by consenting to an armistice with the New States, that was a proceeding to which the Spanish Government never would consent; such a measure being, it was asserted, calculated to deaden the activity of the numerous friends of the Mother Country, who still existed in the Colonies, and who, at any moment, might raise the standard of Spain, and rally round it, a party strong enough to restore her supremacy.

The proposition, however, to negotiate an armistice was taken as a proof of friendly feelings on the part of Great Britain, but no answer was returned to it before the overthrow of M. Zea's

administration, the history of which event must next be detailed.

On Mr. Lamb's first arrival at Madrid \* he found that during the preceding six months the condition of Spain had very considerably improved. M. Zea de Bermudez had every disposition to do all the good in his power ; but without any funds in the Treasury, with the Clergy in opposition, with the flatterers who surrounded the King always whispering in the royal ear insinuations calculated to excite prejudice against him, and with his time more than half occupied in endeavouring to maintain his office, what good could a Minister so situated effect for a Country which was afflicted with the accumulation of every imaginable evil ?

He relied for support on the personal favour of the King, and the countenance which the Foreign Ministers (especially the Russian) were enabled to afford to him. This for a time served him, and he was enabled to effect the dismissal and exile of Ugarte, the favourite, to whom M. Zea owed his own elevation, but with whom he afterwards quarrelled.

The extreme ultra party, at the head of which was Don Carlos, the King's next Brother, and presumptive heir to the Throne, were composed chiefly of the Clergy and municipality.

This party bore the most vehement hatred to M. Zea, and were ready to abandon the King

\* June 12. 1825.

because he supported that Minister. Their grand object was to re-establish the Inquisition ; and they did not hesitate to declare that the King was unfit to reign, because he did not fall into their views. In the beginning of August this party broke out into open revolt. Bessières, who had figured in the war between France and the Constitutionalists by taking part with the former, instigated by the Priests, induced the Army to rebel, under the pretence of getting rid of the obnoxious Minister. M. Zea, however, was more than a match for this attempt. The insurrection was speedily put down, Bessières himself arrested, and shortly after executed.

M. Zea de Bermudez did not retain his office quite two months after this event. Ever since his appointment the minions who surrounded the King had been plotting his ruin ; and to attempt to unravel the intrigues or to speak with certainty as to the manner in which his dismissal was at last brought about, would be impossible. The Duke del Infantado succeeded M. Zea. The change was undoubtedly agreeable to the Royal Family of Spain, to the Clergy and to the Ultras, as well as to the new French Ambassador, the Marquis des Moustiers, and the Austrian Minister, Count Brunetti. The Russian Minister, M. d'Oubril, who had been M. Zea's chief support, was naturally discontented. M. Zea

was in two respects more fortunate than his predecessor; Count Ofalia; first, he was not banished; next, he was still continued in employ, being sent as Minister to the Court of Dresden.

The first professions of the new Premier were that he intended to pursue moderate measures; but one of the first of the acts of his Government was the re-establishment of the Inquisition.

From interfering in all these changes the British Minister kept aloof, contenting himself with carrying on, with whomsoever might be in power, the business of his mission. That business occasionally consisted in offering advice on matters of external policy affecting the welfare of Spain, especially with regard to Cuba. That advice, however, Her Government neglected, or refused to follow. So far, therefore, as She was concerned She had no claim to the good offices of Great Britain. But since it was one of the first principles of Mr. Canning's policy by friendly counsel, not only to endeavour to restore peace but to avert those contingencies whence new wars might arise, he was not to be deterred by the conduct of Spain, from trying to secure to Her the continued possession of Cuba. For this end he proceeded, as he had previously promised to the Spanish Government, to make known both to France and to the United States

the views entertained by Great Britain on the subject.

The Cabinet of Washington was not less desirous than was that of St. James's to bring to a termination, if possible, but at any rate to establish a suspension of, hostilities between Spain and Her late Colonies. In the fulness of this desire the Government of the United States in the beginning of 1825 set a scheme on foot, to induce the Great Powers of the European Continent to concur in persuading Spain to adopt new counsels in respect to her late provinces on the Continent of America. The hopelessness of the success of such an attempt was only to be equalled by its usefulness, if it proved successful. Of all the Great Powers of Europe, France was the one who had the strongest interest in recommending such joint advice and procuring such an adjustment, but France was too much influenced by the Continental Alliance. Of that alliance the moving soul was the Emperor Alexander; and His Imperial Majesty was not, upon this subject, open to the blandishments of flattery, so far as to be induced to use the influence which he possessed, and was proud to be thought to possess, in Europe, in a direction quite "different from that which his principles, his " prejudices, and *perhaps* his interests prescribed; " his interests, because having once missed the

“ golden opportunity of taking the lead, or  
 “ going hand in hand with Great Britain and  
 “ the United States in their line of policy, he  
 “ had no great temptation to change the course  
 “ which he had advisedly chosen, and to expose  
 “ himself to the just reproaches of Spain, for  
 “ having urged her on in her blind folly until  
 “ she was ruined, and then when her ruin had  
 “ been accomplished turning round, and urging  
 “ her to tread back her steps when it was too late.”

The truth, indeed, was that, His Imperial Majesty was inflexible in his policy, respecting Spain, and her Colonies, and that he continued to preach to Spain “ not only no recognition of  
 “ their Independence, but active war for their  
 “ subjugation.”

It was necessary, therefore, if Cuba were to be preserved from the danger in question, to look for other means than those of bringing about, through the intervention of her Continental Allies, peace between Spain, and her emancipated Colonies.

“ Of the importance of this object, the preservation of Cuba to Spain, England and the United States thought alike for the very same reason; viz. that neither of the two could suffer the other to possess it, nor could either of them permit it to fall into the hands of France.”

Mr. Canning, “ for these reasons, wished to bring about the signature by the three Powers,

“ either of these Ministerial notes, one between  
“ France and the United States, and one be-  
“ tween France and Great Britain, or one tri-  
“ partite note signed by all, disclaiming each  
“ for themselves, any intention to occupy Cuba,  
“ and protesting each against such occupation  
“ by either of the others.

“ Such an instrument would have settled the  
“ question as between the great Maritime Powers  
“ of the Old World and the New.

“ The only then remaining danger of Cuba  
“ being snatched from Spain, would have been  
“ from the War with the New States. But  
“ when that was the single danger, there was a  
“ hope that the Spanish Government might be  
“ worked upon, not through the Alliance, not  
“ through France; but, after the proof that  
“ would have been given of the disinterested-  
“ ness and good will of Great Britain and the  
“ United States respecting Cuba, the joint re-  
“ presentation of those two Powers, together  
“ with that of France, if she chose, might have  
“ induced Spain to put an end to that single  
“ remaining danger, by consenting, if not to a  
“ peace, involving immediate recognition, at any  
“ rate to a suspension of hostilities. But to give  
“ any chance of success to such representations it  
“ was essential to separate two questions, not  
“ necessarily connected with each other; viz.  
“ the danger to Cuba from the suspected am-

“ bition of the Old Powers, from that which  
“ impended over it from the New. So long as  
“ peace with the latter was made a condition of  
“ the assurances of safety from the former,  
“ exhortations would be heard with suspicion  
“ and repelled with resentment; whereas once  
“ soothed, and softened by a solemn, and une-  
“ quivocal assurance as to the purity of the  
“ designs of the Governments of Great Britain  
“ and the United States and of the benevolence  
“ of their wishes, the Spanish Government might  
“ be induced to listen to advice in which it could  
“ no longer pretend to trace a lurking motive  
“ of self-interest; and to admit into a delibera-  
“ tion, how Cuba could best be secured from  
“ invasion by Columbia, or Mexico, Powers who  
“ had bound themselves by a common obliga-  
“ tion neither to take, nor to permit the taking  
“ of Cuba to themselves.”

Circumstances occurred which prevented the completion of this design, but the disclosure of the sentiments of Great Britain was not by any means unproductive of advantage.

On the other hand, the scheme of the United States, for a joint interference of the Great Powers of Europe with the Spanish Government, did not meet with any favourable reception.

It was not long after the discussions on the subject of Cuba had passed, that the treaty of reconciliation between Portugal and Brazil

arrived in Europe.— In communicating it to the Spanish Government, Mr. Canning expressed his regret that the period had been suffered to go by, when Great Britain might have been instrumental in negotiating for His Most Catholick Majesty, treaties of reconciliation with His separated Colonies, which should in like manner have preserved the dignity of the Sovereign, and have laid the foundations in the New World of Governments, connected with the Mother Country.

The reconciliation of Portugal with her antient Colony was viewed with dislike, and apprehension by the Spanish Government. The prospect of the benefits likely to result from the renewal of friendly intercourse, by the cessation of war, if realized, to any thing approaching to their probable extent, was calculated to present to the eyes of the world a contrast, which could not be agreeable to Ferdinand, or his Ministers. They dwelt therefore on the probable downfal of Monarchy in Brazil, surrounded, as it was, by so many Republicks. But Republicks are not endowed with immortality: and Mr. Canning had not neglected to make it known, that the King, His Master, took great interest in the welfare and prosperity of the new Emperor, and his dominions; and

that any attempt to overthrow the Brazilian Monarchy would be highly displeasing to Great Britain.

It is but justice to that great man, Bolivar, to state, that he utterly disclaimed entertaining any designs to injure the established Government of Brazil, or that of any other of his neighbours.

If the treaty between Portugal and Brazil was disagreeable to Spain, the events which occurred within a few short months of that treaty, were tenfold more distasteful.

But before those events are detailed it will be necessary to go back, to explain the transactions in Portugal, by which they were preceded.

So soon as Sir Charles Stuart had brought to a satisfactory settlement the differences between Portugal, and Brazil, His Excellency forthwith began to occupy himself with the negotiation of two treaties between Brazil and Great Britain. The regulation of commercial intercourse between the two Countries being the object of the one; the abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade, of the other.

The treaty of 1810 between His Most Faithful Majesty, and the King, of which mention has been already made, was subject to revision, at the pleasure of either party, when fifteen years had expired from the date of its signature. "That treaty was, in essence, though not in form, of a political, as well as of a commercial

“ character. Great Britain received by it signal commercial concessions from Brazil, in return for signal political benefits conferred upon the Mother Country.” It was therefore not to be expected after the separation of the two Countries had been established, that the independent Government of Brazil would consent to the permanent continuance of that treaty exactly in the form in which it then existed. Mr. Canning therefore was well aware that, in dealing with Portugal, and Brazil, separately, we should have to deal with each, in reference, not to their past connection with each other, and with Great Britain, but in reference to the respective circumstances of their altered condition.

“ It was to Portugal herself that the British Government would thenceforth have to look, for whatever compensation it might think just to claim, in return for the perpetual protectorship of the political interests of that kingdom ; as well as for the preference so long given by this country alone of all the World, to the staple produce of Portugal,—her wine. The British Government would, therefore, not be indisposed to relax, in favour of Brazil, those exclusive preferences which British merchants enjoyed in that Country under the treaty of 1810, when Portugal was no longer party to it.” But since it would be sure to prove highly embarrassing that the concessions to Brazil should

be made, before the more scrupulous exaction of equivalents from the Mother Country, so that there should be pleaded against Great Britain, in its negotiations with Portugal, the example of the greater forbearance, which would probably have been manifested to Brazil, it was much to have been wished that the new arrangements with the latter should not only be terminated, but the negotiation of it should not be commenced, until after the signature of the treaty with Portugal.

By the prolongation for two years of the treaty of 1810, the British Government would have been enabled to have secured this object. And moreover there would have been an interval after the Portuguese treaty had been settled, for the merchants of this Country, engaged in the trade with Brazil, to prepare for a diminution of those separate advantages, which they then possessed.

For these reasons Mr. Canning abstained from furnishing Sir Charles Stuart with detailed instructions for the negotiation of a commercial treaty; never imagining that Sir Charles would negotiate, *de novo*, a treaty without them. It appears, however, that Sir Charles thought it best, uninstructed as he was, to enter into such negotiation, at the same time that he settled a separate treaty for the abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade.

When these treaties were signed, they were sent home, ratified by the Emperor of Brazil. But some of the stipulations which they contained rendered it impossible for Mr. Canning to advise their ratification by the King.

These treaties, which have already been given, *in extenso*, to the publick, were obviously liable to many objections.

The first, which may be mentioned, is one, which affected many articles of the treaty, in which the principle of reciprocity was mistakenly assumed to be satisfied, by placing Great Britain and Brazil towards each other, on the footing of the most favoured nation.

“ Now this seemingly equal condition gave at once to Brazil certain decided benefits, but to Great Britain at that time none — and, for the future, such only as it might please Brazil to grant — not to Great Britain, but to other nations.”

There were nations with whom Great Britain had entered into agreements, that their ships and commerce should be dealt with in the ports of the United Kingdom, exactly in the same way as Her own ships and commerce : British ships and commerce being placed in return, in the ports of the other contracting party, on an equality with their own.

This would have been real reciprocity ; and it was the footing, upon which we had stood with

Brazil, as well as with Portugal, under the treaty of 1810. By these then existing obligations, Brazilian ships, and commerce, being entitled under Sir Charles Stuart's treaty to "the footing of the most favoured Nation," would have continued to be treated in British ports on the same terms as British ships and commerce, while Brazil not having then entered into any treaty with any other nation, there existed no test by which the mutual claims of Great Britain upon Brazil could be determined, and no stipulation had been made, which prevented Brazil, in negotiating with a third Power, from reserving immense privileges for Brazilian shipping and commerce, over those of that third Power, by whose footing with Brazil, our footing was, according to Sir Charles Stuart's treaty, to be adjusted.

The inequality of this stipulation is therefore evident.

It must be observed, however, that the stipulation in the 22d article of Sir Charles Stuart's treaty, by which British merchandize was admitted into Brazil upon the payment of an *ad valorem* duty of only 15 per cent., was calculated to correct, as against the supposed third Power, some of the immediate consequences of this inequality, with respect to the merchandize, although not to the shipping, of Great Britain. But then this stipulation was but temporary, and

at its expiration the objections stated, would in every respect be applicable. Moreover, there was nothing in the treaty to hinder Brazil from giving the advantage of the 15 per cent. to every other Nation — and if she were to do so the inequality in question would remain to the prejudice of Great Britain, uncompensated by any peculiar temporary benefit.

The next object was of a still more grave description than the one just discussed.

In article 17.\* of the Treaty, an engagement on the part of the King, was made with the Brazilian Government to enter upon a revision of the mode of exercising the right of search in

\* "The subjects of either of the sovereigns within the dominions of the other, where foreigners are permitted to reside and carry on trade, shall be permitted to trade with other nations in all kinds of produce and merchandise, except in articles which may belong to enemies of either of the two powers, or which may be contraband of war, or reserved for the crown of Brazil. And no other nor greater duties of importation or exportation shall be imposed than are paid or may be paid by merchants of the country whence the goods proceed, whether they be consigned and exported by Brazilian or English subjects, or be their property. In pursuance of the present article, all the property of an enemy of either of the high contracting parties met with at sea in ships of the other, shall be seized; and in order that this principle may have due effect, it is agreed, that the mode and manner of its full execution shall be arranged within as short a period as possible."

time of war. Now, this engagement "was not  
"only at variance with the principles of our ma-  
"ritime policy," but "was such as was calcu-  
"lated to place the British Government in se-  
"rious difficulties.

"The rule of maritime law which Great  
"Britain has always held on this subject, is the  
"antient law and usage of Nations: but it  
"differs from that put forward by France, and  
"by the Northern Powers of Europe; and that  
"which the United States of North America  
"were constantly endeavouring to establish.

"England had braved confederacies, and sus-  
"tained wars, rather than give up this principle;  
"and whenever, in despair of getting the British  
"Government to surrender it by force, recourse  
"had been had to proposals of amicable negoti-  
"ation, for the purpose of defining, limiting, or  
"qualifying the exercise of the right of search,  
"Great Britain had uniformly declined all such  
"overtures, from a conviction of the impractica-  
"bility of qualifying, limiting, or even defining  
"in terms that would be acceptable to the other  
"party, the exercise of the right, without impair-  
"ing, if not sacrificing, the right itself.

"That which England had thus steadily de-  
" nied both to the suggestions of friendship and  
"to the menaces of hostility, on the part of half  
"the Powers of the Old World, and of the oldest  
"established State in the New, was granted by

“ this, article gratuitously to the infant Empire  
 “ of Brazil : it must be said, gratuitously, because  
 “ the concurrence of Brazil in the principle of  
 “ the rule, maintained by Great Britain, on this  
 “ subject, was not at all worth being purchased at  
 “ such a price.

“ Brazil might adopt, if she pleased, the antient  
 “ rule of maritime war, but England could not  
 “ take that adoption, as a concession to herself.  
 “ She could not consent to acknowledge it as  
 “ such, by incurring an obligation, which, when  
 “ published in the treaty, would probably have  
 “ revived questions, which had been happily set  
 “ at rest, and which were never stirred without  
 “ danger, if not to the peace, at least to the good  
 “ understanding of Nations.”

Thirdly, The 40th article of the Treaty of 1810, by which the office of Judge Conservator had been established in Brazil, whereby the affairs of British Merchants were taken out of the jurisdiction of Brazilian Tribunals, was by Sir Charles Stuart's treaty to be abolished.

The abolition of this office was an injury to the interests of British merchants, for which no terms of fiscal preference could compensate. In Portugal (as all British merchants well know), without a Judge Conservator, not only the privileges but the property and persons of British subjects would be felt to be (and, in fact, would be) exposed, without protection, to every species

of arbitrary violence and chicane. And in Brazil there was, in the construction and conduct of the tribunals, no known difference from those of the Mother Country, which would render it safe to depend on them alone for an impartial administration of justice.

The loss therefore of this office in Brazil was that to which the British Government could not consent to submit, at any rate without a struggle to preserve it. But the mischief was sure not to end with Brazil, for it could hardly be expected that Portugal would "consent to the continuance of an establishment, which her offspring "had succeeded in throwing off."

Lastly, By the 10th article of the treaty, individuals accused of high treason seeking shelter in the respective dominions of Great Britain and Brazil were not to receive protection, and were even to be expelled from those dominions if their respective Governments should require it.

This stipulation was likewise at variance with what has been the practice and tenour of the policy of this Country, and was such, as if granted to Brazil, would have immediately induced other Powers to seek to obtain a similar concession.

There were also some objections to the ratification of the Slave Trade treaty. It appears, however, that each of the treaties contained more faults than one. But since there were sent

with them the ratifications of the Government of Brazil, the British Government were reduced to the dilemma, either of adopting it in the whole, or of declining to ratify it altogether. Had there, therefore, been only one point (instead of several) not admissible, that one alone would have equally necessitated the King's refusal to ratify them.

Under these circumstances Mr. Canning was desirous of enabling Sir Charles to rectify his mistakes; and he therefore determined to send out to him fresh instructions, if they should still find him at Rio de Janeiro, or to Mr. Chamberlain, in case of Sir Charles having sailed, together with full powers to negotiate new treaties, free from the objections to which the ones already signed were liable. These instructions and full powers were on the eve of being sent off, when there appeared in the newspapers of the day, copies of Sir C. Stuart's two treaties, translated from a Brazilian journal.

It is difficult to decide with certainty the origin of a "proceeding so disrespectful to the King and so embarrassing to His Government. But, originate how it might, it became equally necessary for the British Government "to take security against its recurrence," especially as the conclusion of the treaties with all the States of the New World had been accompanied by similar publications. In respect to Buenos

Ayres, and Columbia, " it was to be stated, " in extenuation, that the Projêts of treaty were " adopted by the Governments of these Coun- " tries, precisely as framed by the British Govern- " ment, and that, therefore, there was a moral " certainty that the treaties themselves would " be ratified." And in respect to Mexico, the fact that " every article of the treaty had become " publick, through long and violent discussions " in both Houses of the Legislature," afforded some palliation, though not a satisfactory excuse.

In like manner, the treaties signed by Sir Charles Stuart, on behalf of His Most Faithful Majesty, were published by the Brazilian Government against Sir C. Stuart's remonstrances, or at least without his consent.

Mr. Canning, therefore, judged it necessary, both to check a " practice previously unknown " in diplomacy, which was as unseemly as it " was unusual ;" and to prevent the " British " Crown being exposed to the repetition of a " similar affront.

" For this purpose it was determined not to " renew the negotiations in Brazil, but to bring " them to a conclusion in London."

This unwarrantable publication further nece- sitated, " to obviate the inferences which might " be drawn by Foreign Powers from certain " stipulations of the ' Commercial Treaty,' a

“circular disavowal by Mr. Canning of that “instrument.”

It may be well here to mention that a commercial treaty was signed with Brazil, at Rio de Janeiro (where it was subsequently found most convenient to negotiate it), on the 17th of August, 1827. And a convention was also subsequently signed, by which, after March, 1830, the Brazilian Slave Trade was to be considered as piracy by Great Britain, jointly with Brazil.

While these negotiations were being carried on in Brazil, no transactions of moment took place either in Portugal, or between Portugal, and this Country.

Before the dismissal of the Subserra Administration, and consequently before the Portuguese Government had agreed to come to any terms with Brazil, the Government had given notice of its intention to revise the treaty of 1810. After the new Ministry had been installed in office, M. de Porto Santo allowed that question to remain at rest, until after Sir Charles Stuart had sailed from Lisbon ; but before the result of his proceedings was ascertained, the question of the revision of the treaty was again brought forward by the Portuguese Government, and, at the same time, a somewhat unreasonable proposal was made, to limit the time to three months, within which the negotiations were to be brought to a conclusion. This proposal to allow so short a period, Mr.

Canning rejected, and it was finally settled that a treaty should be negotiated, *de novo*, of which the basis was to be mutual concession, and mutual advantage. But since the British Government was quite content with the stipulations of the treaty of 1810, the Portuguese Government being the objecting party, it was considered fair by Mr. Canning, and was acceded to by M. de Palmella, that the task of bringing forward a new *projet* should devolve upon Portugal. In conformity with this agreement, a *projet* was presented by the Portuguese Government; which, however, was not considered admissible by the British Government. It was two months before this *projet* was presented that the Treaty between Portugal and Brazil was received from Rio de Janeiro. By that treaty, the question of the succession to the Crown of Portugal was left untouched. Don Pedro therefore remained the next heir; but since it was impossible to expect that the Portuguese would be content to be governed by the same Monarch, who reigned in their antient Colony, after the separation between the two Crowns, and the two Countries had been decided, it became necessary, if a convulsion were to be prevented, that the succession to the Crown should be settled. This settlement, indeed, was the more urgent, as shortly after the Brazilian treaty had arrived, the health of the King of Portugal, though not such as to portend

immediate danger, nevertheless indicated that his life would not be prolonged for any considerable length of time. His Most Faithful Majesty, as well as his Ministers, was fully alive to the mischief which might ensue, if the question were left undecided. They began, therefore, to deliberate upon it, and sought the counsel of Great Britain: but Mr. Canning thought that on so delicate a matter as an arrangement between two Sovereigns, Father and Son, with respect to a family succession, “a Foreign Government, with “the best and most friendly intentions, might “inadvertently advise a course of proceeding “which might turn out to be inconsistent with the “fundamental laws and established customs of “the Portuguese Realm.” The King and his Cabinet were not indisposed to settle the mode of succession by themselves; but what they chiefly wanted was to obtain security for the maintenance of the arrangement, on which they might ultimately decide, and this they conceived, they could only obtain by the guarantee of England. Official notes were accordingly addressed to Mr. Canning by the Marquis of Pal-mella, requiring the guarantee by this Country of the treaty and convention concluded at Rio de Janeiro, on the 29th of August between the Crowns of Portugal and Brazil; and generally in virtue of antient treaties, and on the ground of moral duty and political expediency of the

succession to the Crown of Portugal, in the right line of the House of Braganza.

To this request Mr. Canning replied, that the British Government could not admit that the treaties between the two Countries contained any stipulation which bound Great Britain to the guarantee of the succession, nor did he think that such an engagement was of a nature for Great Britain to undertake, by considerations of either duty, or expediency. But at any rate it was then impossible for England to consent to guarantee a succession, the order of which had not been determined, and for the legal settlement of which the British Government did not profess to know the forms and usages which were requisite: neither whether “the will of the Sovereign alone was paramount and all-sufficient for such a purpose, nor whether it in theory required, or would be wise in practice, to adjoin to that will, some expression of national consent, to aid its decisions, or to confirm them.”

But although the guarantee desired was what Mr. Canning would not grant, yet he was not the less sensible to the urgency of a speedy settlement, on account both of the infirmities of His Most Faithful Majesty, and of that extreme sensitiveness in the publick mind, which amounted to agitation, whenever any important event occurred, which could by possibility bear upon

the affairs of Portugal. Of this description was the death of the Emperor Alexander, which from his having been the main support of the Holy Alliance, was considered by the revolutionary party, as the removal of one grand obstacle to any alteration, in a popular sense, of the existing order of things at Lisbon. The incertitude in which the future fate of the Country was involved, the want of firmness and decision in the King, the absence of all discipline in the Army, and the doubt as to which side it would espouse in a convulsion, contributed to keep men's minds in a state of feverish excitement: and although all were discontented with what actually existed, few felt satisfied as to what would be the best remedy; and those that did, knew not to whom they could trust for co-operation, in bringing about any measures for the publick benefit.

The reflections which these circumstances suggested to Mr. Canning's mind, were not whether it would be at once advisable to abandon Portugal to its fate, and how, and by what means, we could with tolerable credit, in the eyes of the world, leave the Dominions of the King's most antient, and most faithful Ally to the misery and anarchy of which all the elements existed within Her: but on the contrary, he thought it our duty to endeavour "to save Portugal from herself," as far as that could be done

through the enforcement of salutary advice by the grant or refusal of favours. Spain presented a melancholy spectacle in consequence of the violated promises of her king to grant a constitution. His Most Faithful Majesty had voluntarily made similar promises, and Portugal was rapidly advancing to as deplorable a condition as Her neighbour. Mr. Canning, therefore, in answering the application for guarantee took care to bring full under the view of His Most Faithful Majesty the advantage "of some consultation of "national feeling in Portugal by an appeal to "the Portuguese Nation, through whatever might "be its antient constitutional organs, for the "approval and confirmation of the order of "succession, and of the form of Regency, which "His Most Faithful Majesty might adopt, in "concert with the Government of Brazil."

Before Mr. Canning's answer on the subject of the succession and guarantee reached Lisbon, the effervescence had considerably subsided, in consequence of the improvement in the King's health, and the tranquillity of Europe being undisturbed by the death of the Emperor Alexander. The answer was more favourably received by the King, than by His Ministers. M. de Porto Santo still maintained that the engagements to guarantee, in virtue of the Treaty of 1807, were binding upon Great Britain. As for the King, He did not appear dissatisfied with the answer,

said much about an appeal to the nation, declared that he had ever been in favour of some concessions in a constitutional sense, and that if His promises to his people had not been executed, it was only because he had not seen the moment, when he could execute them without danger.

But before any further steps were taken upon this subject, His Most Faithful Majesty was seized with an alarming illness, which in the course of a few days terminated his existence. His Majesty, however, in the intervals between the paroxysms of his disorder, preserved sufficient possession of his senses to be enabled to direct His Ministers to draw up a decree appointing a Regency, (at the head of which he placed the Infanta, Donna Isabella Maria,) to carry on the business of the State, *not* only during his own illness, but in the event of his death, till the pleasure of the legitimate Successor should be ascertained. The regency was installed the same night. It consisted of the Princess, the Patriarch, the Duque de Cadaval, the Marquis Villada, and the Condé dos Arcos. These individuals were the best, perhaps, that could have been chosen: the Infanta was much beloved, and the others were all anxious to do their best to preserve the general tranquillity, and to maintain the fundamental laws of the empire with respect to the succession. The character

of the regency was such that Sir William à Court was supposed to have had a voice in its formation. But this was not the case; his interference was limited to an assurance to the Secretary of State, that if the Queen should succeed of right to the Regency, she would receive the same support from the British authorities, as her husband had received, so long as her government was conducted with wisdom, and moderation. Upon the same principle when His Most Faithful Majesty in the exercise of his undoubted prerogative was pleased to appoint the Infanta as Regent, Sir William openly avowed his entire satisfaction with the choice, and his determination to give Her Royal Highness every assistance. Sir William could hardly have done more, or less; there were not, however, wanting those who would have urged him on to more active interference; but the example which he gave of forbearance acted as a check upon others of his colleagues. The Queen either did express, or was said to have expressed, her satisfaction at the arrangements.

On the third day \* after the instalment of the Regency the King expired. The British Ambassador immediately proceeded to the palace, where he again assured Count Porto

Santo, that he might look for every countenance and assistance which it was in the power of the British Authorities to offer, in maintenance of the publick tranquillity, and in support of the Government, legally, and constitutionally appointed by the deceased King. Fortunately for the peace of Lisbon, at the time of the King's death, the Queen happened to be in a state of health, which seemed to forbode her dissolution at no very distant period, and it was no part of the character of her partisans to risk any thing for an individual, who was not likely to live long enough to reward them. The old lady herself seemed to have had the natural turbulence of her disposition checked, by the weakness of her physical powers, and some expressions which fell from her indicated a wish that the publick tranquillity should not be disturbed.

This, combined with the installation of the Regency during the king's life, the judicious and well timed declaration of Sir William à Court, the absence of Don Miguel, and the presence of the British squadron in the Tagus, contributed to prevent an explosion, more than either respect for the dispositions of the late king, or any display of wisdom, or vigour on the part of the Government. The letters which, in due time, were written by Don Miguel, under the influence of the Austrian Government, had the best effect. His Royal Highness explicitly declared, in them,

his resolution, to respect the wishes of his father, and to abide by the orders of his brother, and Sovereign. Affairs nevertheless continued in an unsettled condition, while all parties were expecting the arrival of Don Pedro's determination, each in the hopes that it would prove favourable to their own views. A vessel had sailed for Rio de Janeiro from Lisbon with an account of the death of His Most Faithful Majesty, on the very day of its occurrence.

When Mr. Canning heard of that event, Lord Ponsonby was about to sail for South America, as Minister to the new State of Buenos Ayres: and the British Government having been solicited by both the Brazilian and Portuguese Governments to give its advice on the subject of the succession, Mr. Canning determined to furnish that nobleman with instructions of advice to the Emperor of Brazil, as to the course which it would be most expedient for His Imperial Majesty to pursue.

The arrangement,\* which Mr. Canning thought most advisable was, the resignation by Don Pedro of his Portuguese crown, in favour of his eldest daughter, and the marriage of that daughter with her uncle, Don Miguel. This marriage the late King had long had in his contem-

\*. A similar arrangement was suggested by Don Pedro and Prince Metternich, without any concert either with Mr. Canning, or each other.

plation, and other members of the Portuguese Royal Family had been desirous to promote it: It had also, before the death of His Most Faithful Majesty, been made matter of common conversation in Portugal, where the union of persons standing towards each other in this degree of affinity is a constant practice. The only objection to such a course was that, which was presented by the personal character of the Prince, who had disgraced himself, by the part which he acted at Lisbon in the transactions, which (it will be remembered) had been the cause of his exile from Portugal. The arrangement, however, while it was calculated to obviate great calamities, contained within itself a strong security against this single objection.

Don Miguel had without doubt a very powerful party in Portugal. Had he been excluded from all share in the Government, it was not to have been expected that he would have forborene making an effort to disturb a settlement so fatal to his pretensions. But even had he himself been content to abstain, or had he been hindered from again returning to Portugal, the Queen, or his own partisans, would have been certain to have raised a commotion in the Country; civil war therefore would have inevitably followed any attempt for his unqualified exclusion.

The preservation of a people from such a ca-

lamity, was a blessing, which the settlement in question promised; while the very fact of Don Miguel consenting to hold, whatever portion of authority might be conceded to him, from the hands of his niece, as his sovereign, would have been a guarantee against the abuse of that authority, at any rate so far as regarded the individual from whom he was willing to hold it. Moreover the Prince's character was represented as much reformed during his residence at Vienna, and since it was not proposed that he should have the custody of the person of the young Queen, during her minority, which would have lasted upwards of ten years, sufficient time would have elapsed, during which there would have been ample opportunity for ascertaining, whether the Infant would have been really worthy to have become the husband of his Sovereign.

When these views of the British Government were made known to the Portuguese Ministers they expressed the greatest satisfaction, and M. de Porto Santo declared that it was a matter of astonishment both to the Regency and to the Ministers, " how any person not a Portuguese " should so thoroughly understand the question, " and enter so fully into the feelings of the Por- " tuguese Government and the real interests of " both nations in this important arrangement."

Instructions on this point were not the only ones of importance with which Lord Ponsonby

was furnished. He likewise received elaborate directions, to endeavour to effect a termination of the war, which had then begun, between Brazil and Buenos Ayres, to prevent the occurrence of which Sir Charles Stuart had been previously directed to labour. The fact of these instructions having been given is of more importance than their substance, since they prove the anxiety with which Mr. Canning watched over the rising States of the New World, and that he spared neither zeal, nor pains to preserve their tranquillity, and to promote their welfare. In confirmation of this observation it may here be mentioned, that when in the course of this year a congress of all the States of the New World was assembled at Panama, Mr. Canning recommended to the King to send a British Representative to be present at that meeting. By the individual selected, in conformity with that recommendation, he wrote with his own hand to General Bolivar a private letter, expressive of his anxiety for the happiness and prosperity of the New States, and the confidence which he felt that the eminent talents of that great man would continue to be employed, in promoting not only the well-being of Columbia, but that of the New States by which she was surrounded.

When Sir Charles had concluded the treaties between Brazil and Great Britain, he proceeded on a voyage of amusement, to Bahia. His

Excellency did not return to Rio de Janeiro until some time after the ratifications by His Most Faithful Majesty of the treaty, which he had negotiated for Portugal, had reached that capital. When he arrived, the Emperor had actually embarked for Bahia, so that His Excellency had no opportunity of having an interview with His Imperial Majesty. Sir Charles subsequently followed the Court to Bahia. On his return to Rio, he received the intimation that the British Ministers could not advise their Sovereign to ratify his treaties, at the same time with permission to remain at Rio to negotiate new ones. The publication of the treaties, however, caused the British Government to recall this permission. But the consequence of these incidents was, that the messenger, who conveyed to Brazil the news of the death of the King of Portugal, found Sir Charles Stuart still resident at Rio de Janeiro. It was certainly very unfortunate that Sir Charles was still there, for it enabled him to undertake a commission which was very embarrassing to his Government. It appears that, after some plan of proceeding had been discussed in the Council at Rio, which plan was rejected, the Emperor Don Pedro determined "merely to accept the Crown of Portugal, "for the purpose of giving a Constitutional Charter: and in the event of this Charter "being favourably received, and his eldest daugh-

“ ter given to the Infant, Don Miguel, His Imperial Majesty was to abdicate in her favour.” These intentions were communicated by Don Pedro to Sir Charles Stuart, accompanied with the expressions of His Imperial Majesty’s “ wish “ to send these acts to Lisbon through Sir Charles Stuart’s hands, as Portuguese Plenipotentiary.”

Sir Charles “ was somewhat startled at this mark of confidence, which he endeavoured to avoid, by expressing his doubts how far such a course might meet with the approbation of his Court.”

Don Pedro, however, persisted in his determination, when Sir Charles told him that His Imperial Majesty’s “ request embarrassed him very much, since he was wholly unprepared to take upon himself so heavy a responsibility.”

Notwithstanding, Sir Charles was finally persuaded, without waiting for instructions, to comply with the Emperor’s wishes, conceiving that his Government would not be committed by his proceedings.

The arrangements of Don Pedro, precisely coincided with those, which Mr. Canning had instructed Lord Ponsonby to recommend, with the exception of the grant of a Constitution, which Mr. Canning neither advised, nor wished: still less did he wish that Sir Charles Stuart should

have made himself the bearer of it, well knowing that the circumstance of a British Diplomatist, who had held the most distinguished post in the service, conveying such a grant, would rouse the suspicions of the Continental Governments, as to the good faith of England, and would excite in the minds of that portion of the Portuguese Nation which welcomed the boon with gratitude exaggerated expectations of support.

The account of the proceedings of Don Pedro at Rio reached this Country through the medium of the French Government, who received the first intelligence by telegraph from Bayonne. The French ministers seemed much alarmed at the intention of the Emperor of Brazil to establish a constitutional Government in Portugal on account of the effect that it might have on Spain: and the representatives of the Continental alliance at Paris participated in this alarm.

It would certainly have been somewhat singular, if after having overthrown the Constitutions of Naples and Spain, not because they were valueless, but solely because they were not "octroyés" by the Sovereign, the same Powers should have united against that of Portugal, possessing as it did the single qualification, the want of which had been made the pretext for the destruction of the others.

Nevertheless, the language of the Court of

Vienna, which had been held before the report of the Charter had arrived there, was well calculated to excite fears that Prince Metternich might act in a way, which might be dangerous to the tranquillity of Portugal.

So soon, therefore, as Mr. Canning heard of the decrees, which Don Pedro had issued, he earnestly exhorted the Courts of Vienna and Madrid to abstain from any attempt to obstruct their execution. To the Austrian Government his exhortations were the most urgent: for Don Miguel was still under the tuition of the Emperor, and had it pleased Prince Metternich to have carried his theoretical objections to the Portuguese Charter so far as to have sent His Royal Highness to Lisbon to resist the commands of his Imperial Brother, civil commotions would have been the certain consequence. To the French Government Mr. Canning said nothing, the French Ministry having professed sentiments of great moderation, and having promised to exert their influence at Madrid, to prevent any hasty measures on the part of His Catholick Majesty.

To Sir Charles Stuart's announcement of his proceedings Mr. Canning replied \* by pointing out the advantages which the Charter possessed over the antient Cortes, at the same time ex-

pressing his hope that when those Courts which were naturally most adverse to any "convocation of national assemblies should consider " that the avoiding of all such convocation was " absolutely impossible, and that the option " was merely between two forms of assembly, " they would abstain from opposition to that " which had been selected ; the rejection whereof " in Portugal could only lead to a state of things, " which would revive all the difficulties that " had just been overcome, and place the Crown " of Portugal, and not only the Crown, but the " Monarchy itself, of Brazil in danger.

" In order to enable the British Government " to inculcate with more effect on other Governments the duty of abstaining from any interference with the free agency of Portugal, it " became particularly expedient to remove all " grounds of jealousy, as to the exertion of " British influence on so momentous an occasion.

" For this reason," continued Mr. Canning, " while the King entirely approves of your " conduct in having consented (under the peculiar circumstances of your situation in Brazil) " to be the bearer of the Emperor's decrees " from Rio de Janeiro to Lisbon, I am to signify " to you His Majesty's pleasure, that, so soon as " you shall have delivered these several Instruments into the proper hands, and shall have " rendered an account to the Portuguese Ministry

“ of the mission with which Your Excellency  
 “ was charged from His Most Faithful Majesty’s  
 “ Government to the Emperor of Brazil, Your  
 “ Excellency shall take leave of the Infanta,  
 “ Regent, and return home.”

Although, as has been seen, Sir Charles Stuart  
 “ had no authority to act in any matter of this  
 “ kind, and although he did so not only with-  
 “ out instructions, but against what were, in  
 “ reality, Mr. Canning’s wishes,” Mr. Canning  
 felt that he could not “ justly disapprove his  
 “ conduct, because he did permit him advisedly  
 “ to become the negotiator of the treaty of  
 “ separation and independence as Plenipoten-  
 “ tiary of His Most Faithful Majesty; and as a  
 “ counterpart to this undertaking for the behoof  
 “ of Portugal, Sir Charles was given the liberty  
 “ to charge himself on his return to Europe  
 “ with any communications which Don Pedro  
 “ might wish to make to his Father, or his  
 “ Government.”

It is hardly necessary to add that the state of things which was produced by the death of His Most Faithful Majesty was not in Mr. Canning’s “ contemplation when the instructions were “ given to Sir Charles.” The Constitutional Charter was therefore “ not included in them; “ but neither was it excluded; and the permis-“ sion to charge himself with communications “ might be construed into covering the com-

“ munication with which he was charged:  
“ Mr. Canning therefore thought it right at once  
“ to exonerate Sir Charles from all blame by  
“ approving of his conduct; and farther to  
“ defend, what he had done to other courts;  
“ coupling, however, that approbation with his  
“ immediate recall.”

To Sir William à Court Mr. Canning wrote to desire him to conform his language, in his communications with the Portuguese Government on the subject of the Charter, to the opinions expressed respecting it in the despatch which was addressed to Sir Charles Stuart. But Mr. Canning thought it advisable to inform Sir William that “ a foolish notion had got “ abroad in France, that Sir Charles's powers “ from the Emperor of Brazil amounted to “ constituting him a member of the Regency in “ Portugal.” Mr. Canning “ saw nothing in the “ copy of those Powers which he had received “ from Sir Charles which admitted of such a “ construction; and therefore did not think it “ necessary to state a misapprehension in which “ Mr. Canning felt confident His Excellency did “ not participate;” but lest the Regency, or Ministry of Portugal “ should be led into any “ error on this subject, as might possibly be the “ case, and were to consult Sir William upon the “ expediency of requesting Sir Charles Stuart “ to remain at Lisbon, to superintend, either as

“ a Member of the Government, or as a Commissioner of the Emperor of Brazil, or in any other character, the execution of His Imperial Majesty’s decrees, or of any of them, Sir William à Court was instructed to discourage at once any such proposition, and to decline transmitting it to his Court.”

But although Mr. Canning was thus anxious to show that the British Government had not been in any way instrumental to the grant of the Constitution by Don Pedro, he was by no means indifferent to the effects which were likely to be produced in Portugal, if it were repudiated by the people: or even, if in the first instance the antient Cortes should be assembled, if only for the purpose of sanctioning the new Constitutional Charter, before it was carried into operation. Upon the expediency, or inexpediency, of such a course, it was nearly impossible for a foreign Government to form a competent opinion. The British Government could not therefore take upon itself the responsibility of recommending, or dissuading the adoption of it. But since it was a measure, which appeared to Mr. Canning of doubtful policy, he felt bound not to withhold from the Portuguese Government a statement of the reasons on which those doubts were founded; not, however, “ offering them as the settled opinions of the British Government, but as elements of a decision, which it was for the

“ Portuguese Ministers, and for them only, to  
“ form.

“ For if,” said Mr. Canning\*, “ the antient  
“ Cortes had been an assembly so known, and  
“ definite, as that there could have been no dif-  
“ ference of opinion, as to the form in which they  
“ were to be assembled, as to the attributes  
“ which were to belong to them, and as to the  
“ limits within which their powers were to be  
“ confined ; or if there had existed any authority  
“ in Portugal, which at the moment of their con-  
“ vocation could, with the certainty of being  
“ obeyed, have prescribed that form, assigned  
“ those attributes, and enforced such limitation,  
“ it cannot be denied that there would have been  
“ considerable advantage in obtaining for the  
“ new Charter, struck out by Don Pedro, the  
“ sanction of a Cortes, a name coeval with the  
“ Portuguese Monarchy. ”

“ But the Cortes in any shape having been dis-  
“ used for upwards of a century, and the form in  
“ which it was then assembled appearing to have  
“ been even more popular than that of Don  
“ Pedro’s proposed legislative assembly, in as  
“ much as the three orders of the State were  
“ not divided into separate chambers, and that  
“ of the Temporal Nobility was constituted by  
“ election and not by nomination of the Crown,

“ there was, perhaps, ground for Don Pedro’s  
 “ apprehension that the convocation of a Cortes  
 “ would be more likely to lead to the creation of  
 “ a Constituent assembly, than to the adoption  
 “ of his Charter.”

It can hardly be doubted that when Louis XVI. called together the “ *Etats Generaux*,” that those who advised that convocation imagined either that its forms and attributes were so well known, as to preclude discussion, or that there was authority in the Crown to settle them as it pleased. But such was not the case; and an “ institution evoked from the most sacred recesses of the antient Monarchy assumed a “ new shape, and became fatal to the Monarchy “ itself.”

Moreover the Convocation of the Cortes, even if called together for the purpose of sanctioning the adoption of the Charter, “ would have been “ a departure from the Emperor’s commands, “ and *pro tanto*, a defiance of his authority; “ whereby Portugal and her Sovereign would “ have been placed in opposition to each other.”

“ The British Government, therefore, considered the best chance of a safe and tranquil issue to the then crisis in Portugal would be “ by as speedy a compliance as might be suitable, or possible, with Don Pedro’s wishes. “ But if another course were pursued, the British Government would not have been less anxious

“ for its peaceable and happy termination than  
 “ if it had been one, which Great Britain had  
 “ herself advised.”

It was not long after these observations were transmitted to Sir William à Court, that accounts were received from Vienna that, Prince Metternich being much tranquillized, at finding, that the British Government had not been instrumental in instigating Don Pedro to grant the constitution, His Highness's language had become very temperate, and conciliatory. It appeared also that he had no intention to allow Don Miguel to make his appearance on the scene of action, from whom the greatest danger to the Charter was to have been apprehended. The French Government also seemed resolved to abstain from any active interference at Lisbon.

This conduct on the part of the French, and Austrian Governments rendered it the more necessary for that of Great Britain to take care that nothing should occur in Portugal, by which the sincerity of its assurances should be called in question ; and since nothing was more likely to throw doubts upon that sincerity, than any steps being taken by Sir Charles Stuart, “ whether  
 “ under the commission of the Emperor Don  
 “ Pedro, or at the solicitation of the Portuguese  
 “ authorities, which steps could be liable either  
 “ in Portugal, or throughout Europe, to be mis-  
 “ construed as an authoritative interference in

“ the internal concerns of that Country,” Sir William à Court was instructed to do all in his power to efface the impression which such steps, if already taken, without authority, by Sir Charles, might be calculated to create.

Mr. Canning, in his first instructions, had directed Sir Charles to return home, but they were written under the idea that the commercial arrangement which he had been authorized to negotiate between Portugal and Brazil had been brought to a conclusion—an idea which from despatches subsequently received from Sir Charles turned out to be erroneous. Mr. Canning therefore thought it barely possible that Sir Charles might construe the words in his first instructions, “ have rendered to the Portuguese Ministry an account of the Mission with which he was charged,” &c. into a permission to remain at Lisbon for the purpose of “ rendering that account” for an indefinite time. To obviate, therefore, any doubt which might arise in Sir Charles’s mind, as to the execution of these instructions, Mr. Canning sent off an extra packet, with a despatch directing His Excellency “ to deliver into the hands of M. de Porto Santo, “ or in case of M. de Porto Santo’s resignation “ into the hands of his successor, or in default “ of a new appointment, into Sir W. à Court’s “ hands, to be delivered by him to the proper “ minister at a proper time, the papers relative

“ to the commercial negotiation between Portugal and Brazil, in whatever state that negotiation might be.”

While Mr. Canning was thus employed in neutralizing the open, or concealed efforts of the enemies of constitutional freedom to deprive the Portuguese nation of the gift, which its sovereign had conferred, the orders of Don Pedro were gradually being carried into execution. The news of the grant of the Constitution by the Emperor, reached Lisbon before Sir Charles Stuart, who was the bearer of the Constitution itself. A French frigate first brought the intelligence to Europe, and the French Government published the telegraphick despatch, which conveyed the intelligence. This despatch was copied into the English newspapers, so that by this means the Lisbon publick learnt the fact, almost as soon as the Portuguese Government was informed of it by advices from Paris. Considerable embarrassment was thus caused, for the Regency not being able to give the news official publicity, the friends of the proposed new institutions, suspected some design on the part of the Government to suppress them ; while their opponents intrigued against the Charter, even before its provisions were known. This uncertainty endured from the 1st of July to the 7th, on which day Sir Charles Stuart arrived. His Excellency proceeded immediately to Caldas, where the Regency was established.

Sir Charles "in delivering to Her Royal Highness, the Infanta, the several publick acts which had been entrusted to him by the Emperor, told Her Royal Highness that he could not refuse, as Portuguese Plenipotentiary, to take charge of the papers ; but that since they also regulated the internal Government of Portugal, he must wait to learn the sentiments of his Government before he could express an opinion on that part of their contents."

The Members of the Regency and the Ministers were divided " respecting the adoption of the Constitutional form of Government," the party opposed to it contending that no alteration could be made in the Government, without the convocation of the antient Cortes.

The Infanta supported the decrees ; and advised by Sir Charles Stuart, in his character of Portuguese Plenipotentiary, issued on the 12th an energetick, but conciliatory, proclamation, declaring to the nation that Don Pedro had given it a Charter, and pointing out the essential difference between it, and the constitution which had been established in 1822. This judicious measure gained numerous partizans both for the Charter, and the Infanta ; and an extreme impatience for the publication of Don Pedro's decrees was manifested in the Capital and in the provinces. At Oporto, as well as at Lisbon, how-

ever, there were movements of a small portion of the troops in favour of Don Miguel: events which served but to strengthen the Infanta, since they proved that she might rely upon the fidelity of the greater part of the garrisons of those two cities.

Her Royal Highness was consequently enabled to carry her point with the Regency of publishing the Emperor's decrees and Charter, which were accordingly published in due form, the day following that, on which the proclamation was issued. At the same time, orders were given that without waiting for the convocation of the three Estates at Lisbon, the oaths of fidelity to the Charter should be taken by the three orders separately, in all the provinces, as speedily as possible after the last day of the month. So soon as this ceremony should have been performed, the Infanta became sole Regent; and since all but two of the old Ministry had not approved of the constitution, and most of them had tendered their resignations, the Infanta occupied the interval between the publication of the decrees, and her becoming sole Regent, in the formation of a new Ministry.

On the 1st of August the oaths to the constitutional Charter were taken, and the Infanta, in assuming the reins of Government, appointed a set of Ministers, all known as its friends. Don Francisco d'Almeida was the Minister.

for Foreign Affairs, and General Saldanha was appointed War Minister, whose activity at Oporto had been signalized in suppressing the demonstration of the troops there in behalf of Don Miguel.

One of the first acts of the Government thus constituted was, the issue of a decree regulating the manner in which the Deputies to the Lower Chamber were to be chosen.

During all these transactions Sir William à Court had scrupulously abstained from any active interference; and although that of Sir Charles Stuart had been wholly unauthorized, yet Mr. Canning would not disavow him, lest by so doing he should have produced a convulsion in Portugal. This gave a moral support to the new system, whereby numbers were induced to declare themselves, who might have otherwise hesitated to avow their adherence to it.

Sir Charles Stuart left Lisbon in the beginning of August. Before he quitted the shores of Portugal, a portion of Her army on the Spanish frontiers, had shown their disaffection to the Constitution, by proclaiming Don Miguel, King.

Previously to continuing the accounts of these proceedings it will be necessary to revert to the conduct of Spain from the time of the death of His Most Faithful Majesty — a conduct of which the importance was considerably enhanced in consequence of the French Army still occupying

the Country; whereby France was, in a very great degree, necessarily held responsible by other Powers, for actions over which, in point of fact, she had little effective controul.

The last inquiries of the British Government upon the subject of the evacuation were made immediately preceding the time of our recognition of Mexico and Columbia. That measure did not deprive the British Government of the right, of protesting against the occupation whenever circumstances might render it advisable so to do. When, therefore, after the lapse of another year, Spain still continued to be garrisoned by a French force, Mr. Canning again sought to learn from the French Ministry their intentions, respecting this occupation, giving them to understand that Great Britain never could quietly submit to the French troops remaining in Spain, either as a security for the payment of debts due from Spain to France, or as guardians of Spanish fortresses for French purposes.

To these representations the answer was, that the French Government were really anxious to withdraw them, but that the internal condition of Spain remained as hopeless as ever, and that at that moment the removal of the troops would be attended with most disastrous consequences.

The degradation, indeed, of Spain fully bore out the assertions of the French Ministers, and since there was nothing from which Mr. Canning

more cautiously abstained than by pressing the evacuation too closely to raise the point of honour, and since he knew full well that the advantage to France was inconsiderable, he had every disposition to receive favourably the assurances of the French Government. When Sir Robert Wilson therefore asked \* in Parliament when the evacuation was to take place, Mr. Canning stated that he was perfectly "convinced that the "French Government was as anxious to withdraw their troops from Spain as the honourable member was that they should be so withdrawn." And there is every reason to believe that the recall of the French Army in the month of September (1826) had been determined upon when the whole affairs of the Peninsula were complicated by the Charter of Don Pedro.

When at the death of His Most Faithful Majesty the Regency of which the Infanta was the head was installed, Ferdinand and other Members of the Spanish Court had expressed great dissatisfaction at the arrangement, because the Queen Dowager was excluded. They accordingly commenced intriguing, and endeavoured, through their agent at Vienna, to force the return of Don Miguel to Portugal, while for a long time His Catholick Majesty neglected or refused to acknowledge the Regency, as the legitimate

March 10. 1826.

Government of Portugal. At first the Portuguese Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid was not permitted to present his letter from the Regency, and the Spanish Ambassador at Lisbon was not allowed to continue his diplomatick functions. After a little time the Spanish Government relaxed in these particulars ; but it was not till repeated cautions had been given by the British Government, that this Country would not permit foreign interference by Spain in Portuguese affairs, that the credentials of the Spanish Ambassador were transmitted to Lisbon.

The arrival of Don Pedro's charter was the signal for the renewal of intrigues, on the part of the Spanish Government in Portugal : the effects of which were shortly traced in the desertion of the Portuguese troops on the Spanish frontiers. Mr. Canning dreading the effect, which the news might have upon Ferdinand, had pointed out to him that the best chance of tranquillity for Spain was that peace should be maintained in Portugal ; and that if His Catholick Majesty feared the effect in Spain of free institutions flourishing in Portugal, on the other hand, a brother acting in opposition to the will, and endeavouring to usurp the rights of his elder brother and Sovereign was, perhaps, that particular example which it would be the most dangerous for the King of Spain to encourage, in a kingdom bordering on his own.

But Ferdinand, absolute as he was supposed to be, was in fact by no means master in his own dominions; and the Spanish local authorities frequently paid more attention to the party, who wished to raise Don Carlos to the throne, than to the actual Government of Spain. On the 1st and 2d of August two Regiments, with drums beating and colours flying, with their commanders at their heads, passed from Elvas, and Estremoz in the south, and from Braganza in the north, across the boundary into Spain, where they were received in a friendly way by the agents of the Government.

This conduct would have been a breach of amity towards Portugal of the most flagrant kind, even if there had been no treaties between the two Countries prohibiting the harbouring of deserters by either; but such stipulations being in existence, rendered it the more probable, that, if the grievance in question were not abated, the two kingdoms would be speedily involved in war with each other.

At this critical moment Portugal had no representative at Madrid. M. Gomez, who had been accredited to the King of Spain, having refused to swear fidelity to the Constitution, had ceased to execute his functions.

In this emergency, (Great Britain being bound to support Portugal in any war, which might be wantonly commenced by Spain, and having,

therefore, a direct interest in the preservation of peace,) the British Minister at Madrid, Mr. Lamb, undertook to represent in strong terms to the Spanish Government the consequences which must result from a perseverance in receiving the Portuguese deserters. The Duc del Infantado replied, that the commanders had acted without instructions ; but he nevertheless endeavoured to justify their conduct, by asserting that the regiments had been disarmed, and the troops removed to a distance from the frontiers. The Duc probably sincerely wished to put an end to this treacherous mode of attacking Portugal, and doubtless meant to make good his words ; but the ultra party was too strong for him ; and in the course of the month of August he retired from his post of first Minister, and was succeeded by Don Manuel Gonsalez Salmon.

Although Mr. Lamb thus exerted himself on behalf of Portugal, yet many things remained to be done, which could only be effected by Her own representative. On the defalcation of M. Gomez, the Count de Villa Real (the individual who was supposed to be most likely to be acceptable) was forthwith sent in the character of Ambassador to Madrid, with instructions to demand the immediate surrender of the deserters. The Spanish Government refused to receive the Count's credentials, on the plea that France and Austria had not recognized the

Regency of Portugal, and therefore that Spain could not take the lead in so grave a matter, which she would do, were Ferdinand to receive M. de Villa Real as Portuguese Ambassador. Notwithstanding this unwarrantable refusal, justified, as it was, on false pretences (for France had recognized the Regency), M. de Villa Real, by the advice of Mr. Lamb, consented to abstain from pressing the immediate reception of his letters of credence; and in the first instance directed his views to the attainment of positive, and substantial proofs of good will, as the best means of smoothing difficulties, and affording time for the subsidence of irritation. He accordingly contented himself with requiring the delivering up of the deserters.

Before the answer which Spain was prepared to return was authentically known in London, Mr. Canning, foreseeing the probability of some objections on the part of Spain, and conceiving the satisfaction of the point of honour, and the manifestation of a friendly disposition towards Portugal, to be the essential object, took upon himself to advise the Regency of Portugal to accept the restitution of the arms, accoutrements, &c. of the deserters as a sufficient reparation, and to waive the just claim to their persons.

The Regent willingly acceded to this advice. Indeed the conduct of the Infanta, with the exception of an injudicious proclamation,

issued on the 1st of August, claiming a right to the Regency during the minority of the young Queen, whereby Don Miguel's jealousy was likely to be roused, had been in every way marked by the utmost moderation, and most perfect good sense. As a further proof of moderation, desertions from Spain into Portugal having taken place, the Portuguese Government declared its willingness to do by Spain, all that it demanded from Spain, and to compensate the restitution which it required, with reciprocal restitutions on its part.

Notwithstanding all this, the Spanish Ministers, conscious that upon the single point in dispute there was no just ground to raise a difficulty, endeavoured to complicate it with other matters with which it had no connexion, pretending that a compliance with the demands of Portugal would be an acknowledgment of the authority of the Regency.

In making these delays the Spanish Government were encouraged by M. de Moustiers, who avowedly held one language as the representative of France, and another, when speaking his private sentiments, as an individual. The consequence was, that the opinions of the individual neutralized the representations of the Ambassador. It was at this period\* of these

transactions that Mr. Canning visited Paris, and had personal communications with the French Ministers, who were undoubtedly anxious that Spain should change the unfriendly attitude which She had assumed towards Portugal, and sent *bonâ fide* orders to M. de Moustiers to act in this sense ; but that Ambassador preferred his party to his employers ; and the former were watching with intense eagerness the events in the Peninsula, in the hope that ultra principles, and French influence would once more triumph in that quarter of Europe.

The Portuguese Regency having consented, at the suggestion of Great Britain, to moderate those demands, on which both by the Law of Nations and by treaty it had a right to insist, Mr. Canning felt that it would be impossible quietly to witness the Spanish Government turning this moderation to the disadvantage of Portugal, on the plea which they then thought proper to set up, that treaties stipulated for the delivery of deserters with their arms, accoutrements, &c., and that the Portuguese Government did not conform itself to the letter of the treaties, because it only asked for the arms and accoutrements, and not for the persons of the deserters.

Mr. Canning, therefore, directed (October 4.) Mr. Lamb, if he were unable to obtain the order for the restitution of the arms and accoutre-

ments, in time to be made known at Lisbon, before the meeting of the Cortes (who were to assemble on the 1st of November), to quit Madrid, in order to mark in the strongest manner (consistently with the non-interruption of friendly relations between the two Countries) the disapprobation of his Government. In the event of the Spanish Government yielding, Mr. Lamb was to watch over the *bonâ fide* execution of the order, and to insist upon the dispersion of the deserters, who it appears had actually taken, within the confines of Spain, an oath of fidelity to Don Miguel, as King of Portugal. Before these directions reached Madrid, the vigorous remonstrances, addressed by Mr. Lamb to the Spanish Government, had extorted the necessary orders; whereby one ground for apprehension that hostilities would break out between the two nations of the Peninsula was removed.

Another cause for alarm, however, still remained. For although in all these proceedings Mr. Canning had been cordially seconded by Russia, whose Government from the very first had acted with the utmost frankness, and had manfully rebuked the Austrian doctrine that Sovereigns had not a right to give *new* institutions to their people; yet the Court of Vienna, which for a time had been satisfied, now began to insinuate that in case the King of Spain should find himself compelled to protest against

the establishment of a new régime in Portugal, as incompatible with the safety of his own Kingdom, the Emperor would think himself bound to give his support to any proceeding which His Most Catholick Majesty might judge it right to adopt for this purpose. Notwithstanding this sign of enmity to the Portuguese Constitution, the Austrian Ministers were unwilling, without some plausible excuse, to proclaim undisguised hostility, and to make themselves responsible for the consequences of Don Miguel being allowed to depart from Vienna and to proceed to Lisbon. They therefore tried to subvert the Constitution by less direct methods; and Spain was encouraged to persevere in debauching into desertion the Portuguese soldiery. Secret emissaries were sent also from Vienna to Lisbon, who fomented discontent against the Constitution, and every act, which could be construed into a recognition of the Constitutional Government, was carefully avoided.

The question, on which more particularly depended the peace of Portugal, was, whether, or no, Don Miguel would consent to take the oath of fidelity to his brother, and swear to support the Charter. At first the Infant declined to swear, making various pretexts for delay, and it was not till the middle of October, within three weeks of the meeting of the Cortes, that His Royal Highness judged it expedient to go

through this ceremony, and to declare his consent to the marriage. This conduct of the Infant was, however, of comparatively small importance, unless it were made known at Lisbon before the opening of the Chambers. For the consequence of the belief being entertained there, that His Royal Highness had repudiated the Constitution, by refusing to obey his brother's orders, would have been a vote, excluding him from the benefits and privileges which were conferred upon him by that Constitution: a vote, which, by enraging his partizans, would have served but as the signal for their revolt. Although that misfortune was obviously the effect to be anticipated, from suppressing the knowledge of the fact of his having taken the oath from those who would have conveyed it to Lisbon, the Austrian Ministers took especial care to conceal it, and succeeded in so doing for upwards of a week. Authentick information of the circumstance at last reached the British Ambassador, by whom the important intelligence was forthwith communicated to Mr. Canning, who still happened to be at Paris, where he had been expecting the news, with great anxiety. He received it on the 19th of October. The 31st of that month was the day fixed for the opening of the Cortes at Lisbon. Not an instant was to be lost; and a messenger was despatched with the utmost expedition to Lisbon, where he arrived suffi-

ciently early on the morning of the 31st to enable the Infanta, Regent, to announce to the Cortes in her Speech, that her “ brother had taken the “ oath to the Constitutional Charter, without “ any condition, or qualification whatever.”

This announcement gave strength to the Government, and confidence to the supporters of the new institutions. Moreover, it encouraged the hope that, since the Infant had thus far implicitly obeyed his brother's commands, His Royal Highness would not refuse to comply with an order which Don Pedro had sent him, to repair to Rio de Janeiro in a ship of war which His Imperial Majesty proposed to despatch to Europe for the purpose of conveying him. Had Don Miguel traversed the Atlantick, there would have been no cause to fear his unseasonable arrival in Portugal.

Nothing remarkable occurred at the first opening of the Cortes. In the lower Chamber the ultra liberals had a very decided preponderance; but in the Peers the ultra monarchists were by far the most numerous. Nevertheless the two Chambers seemed better disposed to co-operate for the publick welfare, than could have been expected, with reference to their composition.

On the 4th day after their meeting Lord Beresford reached Lisbon. His Lordship had been invited by the Infanta to assume the command of the army, in order to restore amongst

the troops that discipline, the want of which had been the source of most, and had aggravated all, the evils with which Portugal had been afflicted.

Thus there seemed reasonable ground for hope that the Country would have prospered under the new order of things, if it had been left unmolested.

But the hatred of the Austrian, and Spanish Governments to any thing in the shape of free institutions, urged them into acts which common prudence should have taught them to avoid.

The promise of Spain \*, to deliver up the arms and accoutrements, was followed not by its fulfilment, but by incursions from Spain of Portuguese deserters into the North of Portugal, at the same time that an insurrection was stirred up in the Algarves. The latter was speedily put down, and the former were driven back by the Government forces : but the rebels were only driven into Spain, where they were received and again protected by the local authorities. While these proceedings were going on, the Spanish Ministers talked, as if they intended, to fulfil the very limited promises, which they had given, although the mode which they proposed † of doing so was most unreasonable.

They insisted upon treating Portugal as an un-

acknowledged Power, although a Spanish Ambassador was actually resident at Lisbon.

They insisted that the Portuguese deserters were unoffending refugees, who had left their country only as a mode of showing their disapprobation of an unexampled innovation in the political institutions of the Monarchy, at the very moment when they denounced their own deserters, as traitors, and rebels.

They would engage for nothing as to the dispersion of the Portuguese deserters, although they were notoriously in arms on the frontiers, taking oaths of fidelity to Don Miguel, as King, and in default of him, to a Spanish Infanta.

In-addition to all this, in the course of October, more than one incursion of Spanish Troops into Portugal had *actually* been made.

Mr. Canning had just left Paris when these accounts reached him. He at once directed them to be communicated to the French Ministers, warning them that, if they were persevered in, Great Britain would be called upon to fulfil Her treaties with Portugal ; and if She should be so called upon, and the *casus fæderis* should be clearly made out, the British Government would infallibly act with good faith towards its Ally. These warnings were addressed to the French Ministers, because their army in Spain constituted the chief difficulty in the case, and rendered the probable consequences of a British force being sent

to Portugal, a matter of infinitely greater hazard, than if Spain had stood single. For it is difficult to suppose that the Spanish Government, or, perhaps, rather the Spanish ultra faction, which controlled the Government, would have dared to carry its hostility to Portugal to the lengths which it had done, if they had had to depend on their own exclusive resources, for preserving the tranquillity of their Country. If Spain persisted in her course of aggression against Portugal, while France still occupied the former, France must have been responsible for the war, which Spain would have provoked, and could not have long escaped herself, from mingling in the contest. If Portugal were forced into a war, had She thought proper to have called the Spanish Exiles to her assistance, the British Government could not have counselled her to abstain from such a measure. In that case, it would have been not a war between Portugal and Spain, but a war between the Constitutional and Apostolicals. In such a war begun by Spain, countenanced by the French Army, it would have been difficult for France not to have joined. She would hardly have submitted to witness the re-establishment of the constitutional fabrick, which she had demolished, and the destruction of that which she had raised, at such a vast expense; while, on the other hand, the maintenance of national faith would have compelled the British Government to send

succours to Portugal. Thus France and England would have been engaged in a war, as auxiliaries of Spain and Portugal. But how long could such a relative state of things have lasted? Can it be supposed that Spain and Portugal would have continued principals in such a contest, for a week, or even for a day?

The French Ministers saw the impending danger, and were really anxious to avert it, so far as they could do so, by the instructions which they sent to their Ambassador. But the Marquis de Moustiers encouraged the Spanish Apostolicals, who, thus fortified by the representative of France, by the intrigues of the Court of Vienna, and perhaps by the misconstrued forbearance of Portugal, pursued their reckless career. They were in truth the Government *de facto* in Spain, and they lorded it over the Government *de jure*; so that, in spite of the promises of the Spanish Ministers, the Portuguese deserters were kept undispersed on the frontiers, the arms were not delivered up, the regiments were fed at the expense of Spain, were equipped by the Governors of Badajos and Ciudad Rodrigo, and in open day the soldiers, and their commanders were allowed to renew the oath of fidelity to Miguel. At last, on the 22d of November, all their preparations being completed, these rebel corps, which had been organized along the whole line of the frontier, made two separate inroads into

Portugal: one division, under Chaves and Cannellas, entered the province of Tras-os-Montes in the North, and the other, in the South under Magessi, marched to Villa Vcosa, on the road to Lisbon. At the very moment when these invasions took place, the professions of the Spanish Ministers were more pacifick than ever; and on the same day that the account of the invasion reached Lisbon, accounts likewise arrived of the Government at Madrid having given most positive assurances, that the arms should be restored, the deserters dispersed, and Chaves and Cannellas arrested and sent out of the kingdom: it even held out expectations of the recognition of the Regency. The first report of these invasions reached London on the 3d of December, by telegraph, through Paris: but the details were not sufficiently authentick to enable the British Government to do more, than despatch a small squadron to Oporto.

When the French Government heard of the invasion, it then set about to avert its consequences. M. de Moustiers was at last recalled, and the King of Spain was distinctly told, that he must not look to support from France.

On the 3d of December, M. de Palmella addressed an official note to Mr. Canning, making a formal demand for succour, to resist the aggression from Spain. Fortunately, at this unusual period of the year, Parliament was assembled,

and Mr. Canning felt, that something was necessary to be done, before the adjournment, to obtain the sanction of the Legislature, not for an immediate armament, but for assurances of support, in case an armament should be necessary. He accordingly forthwith drew the draft of a message from the King, calculated to elicit from Parliament the assurances in question. But Lord Liverpool being for the moment unable to attend to business from indisposition, it was not immediately discussed. On the 5th, despatches from Mr. Lamb announcing the before-mentioned promises, on the part of the Spanish Government, to give reparation to Portugal, removed the necessity of any immediate step. But the fact of the application from the Portuguese Ambassador having got abroad, Sir Robert Wilson proposed, on the evening of the 5th, to put some questions to Mr. Canning respecting it. Mr. Canning happened then to be unwell, and requested Sir Robert to postpone his question till the next day "sincerely intending to be then in his place." He was, however, prevented by illness, and the interrogation was accordingly put off, till the 12th. From the 5th to the 8th Mr. Canning continued indisposed. On the evening of the 8th despatches arrived from Sir William à Court with details, ~~not~~ of the invasion of Tras-os-Montes, the account of which had arrived through Paris, but of the in-

vasion of the deserters, who were advancing on Lisbon. Here then was the *casus foederis*. On the morning of the 9th Mr. Canning prepared the Message. In the afternoon it was taken into consideration by the Cabinet, and adopted. The following day, the 10th, it received His Majesty's approbation, and on Monday the 11th was brought down to Parliament, and was ordered to be considered the next day (the 12th), when the troops were on their march for embarkation.

At the time when this decision was taken it was one of the most fearful importance. It was impossible for any one to predict, that it was not the commencement of a general war. France, and Spain had been repeatedly told that England would not allow the Constitutional Government of Portugal to be overthrown by foreign interference ; and although there is every reason to believe that both the French and Spanish Ministers dreaded a war with England, yet the former encouraged the invasion, by allowing their army to remain in Spain, and M. de Moustiers to continue at Madrid ; and the latter by the organization of the Portuguese deserters on the frontiers, and their entry into Portugal in hostile array, permitted the lie to be given to their most solemn engagements.

This inconsistency of conduct can only be explained by the fact, that the Congregationists of France, and the Apostolicals of Spain, en-

couraged by Austria, maintained too powerful an influence over the Cabinet of Paris, and absolutely lorded it over that of Madrid. The first, allowing itself to be thus controlled, in the hope that the passion of the British nation for peace, and the known bias of a part of the English Cabinet against the liberals, would triumph over Mr. Canning, and prevent succours being sent to Portugal at all, or if at all, not in time to preserve from destruction Her infant Constitution.

But those who thus reasoned knew little of Mr. Canning, and wrongly estimated the feelings of those, whom they supposed to be his opponents. Mr. Canning had right on his side ; and his supposed antagonists, whatever might be their opinions of the new institutions of Portugal, had too nice a sense of what was due to the national character, to oppose the maintenance of the national faith. The question on which the British Government had to decide was, whether the *casus fæderis* had arisen. If it had, our treaties told the rest. It was not necessary to argue it as a matter of policy ; to flinch from the execution of our deliberate engagements, would have been to have tarnished the honour of Great Britain, and would consequently have been, under any circumstances, in the highest degree impolitick. It was true, indeed, we might have adhered to the letter of

our treaties, at the same time, that by the dilatoriness with which we performed them, all the moral effect of such adherence would have been done away. But Mr. Canning took care that the decision should not be stultified by any delay in its execution, and the rapidity with which the expedition was fitted out, stands without an example in the annals of the Country.

The energy thus manifested by Great Britain would have been alone, perhaps more than sufficient to have convinced the French, and Spanish Governments of the necessity of enforcing their measures, to escape being involved, against their will, in a war with Great Britain ; but there can be no doubt, that the factions, which had hitherto been sufficiently powerful to influence and to controul them, were looking not only with complacency, but with desire upon the approaching contest, which their mad folly seemed on the eve of producing.

The best, therefore, if not the only, chance of preventing collision, was to strike into the hearts of the Continental apostolicals a salutary terror of a war. The expedition was sufficient to convince them that England was prepared for it. But, alas ! they not only fancied themselves prepared, but were actually eager for the contest. To set before them, therefore, its dangers, in colours sufficiently glowing to make them fear to encounter them was an act of bold daring ; but under the

circumstances of the case was one of the most consummate prudence.

With these views Mr. Canning rose on the 12th of December to propose, in answer to the King's most gracious message\*, an address which

\* THE KING'S MESSAGE.

“ GEORGE R.—His Majesty acquaints the House of Commons that His Majesty has received an earnest application from the Princess Regent of Portugal, claiming, in virtue of the ancient obligations of alliance and amity between His Majesty, and the Crown of Portugal, His Majesty's aid against an hostile aggression from Spain.

“ His Majesty has exerted himself for some time past, in conjunction with His Majesty's Ally, the King of France, to prevent such an aggression, and repeated assurances have been given by the Court of Madrid of the determination of his Catholick Majesty, neither to commit, nor to allow to be committed, from his Catholick Majesty's territory, any aggression against Portugal; but His Majesty has learned, with deep concern, that notwithstanding these assurances, hostile inroads into the territory of Portugal have been concerted in Spain, and have been executed under the eyes of Spanish Authorities, by Portuguese Regiments, which had deserted into Spain, and which the Spanish Government had repeatedly and solemnly engaged to disarm, and to disperse.

“ His Majesty leaves no effort unexhausted to awaken the Spanish Government to the dangerous consequences of this apparent connivance.

“ His Majesty makes this communication to the House of Commons with the full and entire confidence, that his faithful Commons will afford to His Majesty their cordial concurrence and support in maintaining the faith of treaties, and in securing against foreign hostility the safety and independence of the kingdom of Portugal, the oldest ally of Great Britain.

“ G. R.”

would be “in effect an echo of the sentiments, “ and a fulfilment of the anticipations of that “ Message.” In making such a proposition “ I feel,” said Mr. Canning, “ that however “ confident I may be in the justice, and however “ clear as to the policy of the measures therein “ announced, it becomes me as a British Minister, “ recommending to Parliament any step which “ may approximate this Country even to the “ hazard of a war, while I explain the grounds “ of that proposal, to accompany my explana- “ tion with expressions of regret.

“ I can assure the House, that there is not “ within its walls any set of men more deeply “ convinced than His Majesty’s Ministers, — nor “ any individual more intimately persuaded than “ he, who has now the honour of addressing “ you,—of the vital importance of the con- “ tinuance of peace, to this Country and to the “ World. So strongly am I impressed with this “ opinion—and for reasons of which I will put “ the House more fully in possession before I “ sit down—that, I declare, there is no ques- “ tion of doubtful or controverted policy—no “ opportunity of present national advantage—no “ precaution against remote difficulty,—which “ I would not gladly compromise, pass over, or “ adjourn, rather than call on Parliament to “ sanction, at this moment, any measure which “ had a tendency to involve the Country in

“ war. But, at the same time, Sir, I feel that  
 “ which has been felt, in the best times of  
 “ English history, by the best Statesmen, of this  
 “ Country, and by the Parliaments by whom  
 “ those Statesmen were supported — I feel that  
 “ there are two causes, and but two causes,  
 “ which cannot be either compromised, passed  
 “ over, or adjourned. These causes are, ad-  
 “ herence to the national faith, and regard for  
 “ the national honour.”

Mr. Canning then proceeded, first to explain the effect of the treaties by which we were bound to assist Portugal, and then to show that the entry of the Portuguese deserters “ armed, “ clothed, and regimented by Spain,” constituted the *casus fœderis*, by which we were bound to fly to the assistance of our Ally. Nevertheless Mr. Canning understated the case, with respect to Spain, in order to leave her a “ *locus peniten-  
 tiæ*;” at the same time he took especial care, distinctly to mark that the vote which he called upon the House to pass, was “ a vote for the “ defence of Portugal, not a vote of war against “ Spain.”

“ It will be for Spain,” he observed, “ upon  
 “ knowledge of the step now taken by His  
 “ Majesty, to consider in what way she will meet  
 “ it.” But that Spain might meet it “ with re-  
 “ dress and reparation,” that Austria and France  
 might urge her so to meet it, Mr. Canning added

that he “ wished it to be distinctly understood “ that although in his judgment nothing short “ of a point of national faith, or national honour, “ would justify at that moment any approxima- “ tion to the possibility of war,” it was not that he “ dreaded war in a good cause, (and in no “ other” he hoped that it would be “ the lot “ of this Country ever to engage,) from a “ distrust of the strength of Great Britain “ to commence it, or of her resources to “ maintain it. I dread it,” he continued, “ but “ upon far other grounds: I dread it from an “ apprehension of the tremendous consequences, “ which might arise from any hostilities in “ which we might now be engaged. Some “ years ago, in the discussion of the nego- “ tiations respecting the French war against “ Spain, I took the liberty of adverting to this “ topick. I then stated that the position of this “ Country in the present state of the world, was “ one of neutrality, not only between con- “ tending nations, but between conflicting prin- “ ciples; and that it was by neutrality alone “ that we could maintain that balance, the pre- “ servation of which, I believed to be essential “ to the welfare of mankind. I then said, that “ I feared that the next war which should be “ kindled in Europe, would be a war not so “ much of armies, as of opinions. Not four “ years have elapsed, and behold my appre-

“hension realised ! It is, to be sure, within  
“narrow limits that this war of opinion is at  
“present confined : but it *is* a war of opinion,  
“that Spain (whether as Government, or as  
“Nation,) is now waging against Portugal ; it is  
“a war which has commenced in hatred of the  
“new institutions of Portugal. How long is  
“it reasonable to expect that Portugal will ab-  
“stain from retaliation ? If into that war this  
“Country shall be compelled to enter, we shall  
“enter into it, with a sincere and anxious de-  
“sire to mitigate, rather than exasperate, — and  
“to mingle only in the conflict of arms, not in  
“the more fatal conflict of opinions. But I much  
“fear that this Country (however earnestly she  
“may endeavour to avoid it), could not, in such  
“case, avoid seeing ranked under her banners,  
“all the restless and dissatisfied of any nation  
“with which she might come in conflict. It is  
“the contemplation of this new *power* in any  
“future war, which excites my most anxious  
“apprehension. It is one thing to have a  
“giant’s strength, but it would be another to  
“use it like a giant. The consciousness of such  
“strength is, undoubtedly, a source of con-  
“fidence and security ; but in the situation in  
“which this Country stands, our business is not  
“to seek opportunities of displaying it, but to  
“content ourselves with letting the professors  
“of violent and exaggerated doctrines on both  
“sides feel, that it is not their interest to con-

“ vert an umpire, into an adversary. The situation of England, amidst the struggle of political opinions, which agitates more or less sensibly different countries of the world, may be compared to that of the Ruler of the Winds, as described by the poet:—

— “ ‘ Celsa sedet Æolus arce,  
“ ‘ Sceptra tenens; mollitque animos et temperat iras;  
“ ‘ Ni faciat, maria ac terras cælumque profundum  
“ ‘ Quippe ferant rapidi secum, verrantque per auras.’ ”

“ The consequence of letting loose the passions at present chained and confined, would be to produce a scene of desolation, which no man can contemplate without horror: and I should not sleep easy on my couch, if I were conscious that I had contributed to precipitate it by a single moment.

“ This, then, is the reason—a reason very different from fear—the reverse of a consciousness of disability,—why I dread the recurrence of hostilities in any part of Europe: why I would bear much, and would forbear long; why I would (as I have said) put up with almost any thing that did not touch national faith and national honour;—rather than let slip the furies of war, the leash of which we hold in our hands, not knowing whom they may reach, or how far their ravages may be carried. Such is the love of peace which the British Government acknowledges,

“ and ~~watch~~ the necessity of peace which the circumstances of the world inculcate.

“ Let us fly,” said Mr. Canning, in conclusion, “ to the aid of Portugal by whomsoever attacked; because it is our duty to do so: and let us cease our interference where that duty ends. We go to Portugal not to rule, not to dictate, not to prescribe Constitutions, but to defend and to preserve the independence of an Ally. We go to plant the standard of England on the well-known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted foreign dominion shall not come.” \*

Sir Robert Wilson followed Mr. Canning. He approved the address, but thought Great Britain was bound to require of France that she should march her troops out of Spain, as the first step to the defence of Portugal.

Mr. Joseph Hume the Member for Aberdeen, opposed the motion, because we could not afford war. He said it was inconsistent in Mr. Canning, who had advocated peace in 1823 to pre-

\* When this speech was first printed, by authority, a malicious paragraph appeared in a morning Paper, asserting that it had been curtailed and essentially altered. The truth of this assertion is easily brought to the test, by comparing the corrected report of the Speech, with the reports given of it in the Newspapers. We have made the comparison, and we defy the most ingenious and malignant of Mr. Canning's enemies to establish the veracity of the accusation.

cipitate the country into a war, and moved as an amendment that "the House be called over that day week."

Mr. Baring amongst other observations "could not help regretting that Government had looked so passively on the invasion of Spain in 1823. If at that time the same resolution had been shown in the case of Spain, as was then shown in the case of Portugal, Europe would have been saved from that calamity, into which he firmly believed at some time or other that invasion would draw it."

Mr. Brougham in the handsomest and most manly manner lauded the course pursued by the Government, and especially the sentiments with which Mr. Canning had justified it. He wisely remarked, with the sagacity of a real statesman, "that a small sum spent in time, might be the means of saving an expenditure of ten times that amount," and that "the risking of a thousand men (dreadful as the alternative might be) might prevent the renewal of the horrors of war on a more extended scale."

Mr. Brougham then discreetly touched upon that part of Mr. Canning's speech relating to the war of principle, remarking on the confidence which the knowledge of that power must inspire.

Mr. Bright contended that the *casus fœderis* was not made out, and that we were only bound

to assist Portugal in case of actual hostilities having been commenced.

Mr. Canning then rose to reply. In answer to Mr. Bright he vindicated the policy of nipping the growing hostilities in the bud, instead of waiting as the Gentleman recommended till "the aggressions had ripened into full maturity, " in order that "in they might be mowed down with the scythe of a magnificent war."

With respect to Mr. Joseph II's amendment, and the attempt to justify it by a "reference to the conduct of the Government and to the language used by" Mr. Canning on the invasion of Spain by France, although it was truly stated that he did not then "deny that cause for war had been given by France, in the invasion of Spain, if we had thought fit to enter into war on that account, yet it seemed to be forgotten that there was one main difference" between the two cases. In the first we were "free to go to war if we pleased on grounds of political expediency. But we were not bound to interfere on behalf of Spain, as in the latter case "we were *bound* to interfere on behalf of Portugal by the obligations of treaty. War might on behalf of Spain have been our free choice, if we had deemed it politick — interference on behalf of Portugal was our duty, unless we were prepared to

“ abandon the principles of national faith, and  
“ national honour.

“ It was a singular confusion of intellect which  
“ confounded two cases so precisely dissimilar.  
“ Far from objecting to the reference to 1823, I  
“ refer,” said Mr. Canning, “ to that same occa-  
“ sion, to show the consistency of the conduct of  
“ myself and my Colleagues. We were then  
“ accused of truckling to France, from a pusil-  
“ lanious dread of war. We pleaded guilty to  
“ the charge of wishing to avoid war. We des-  
“ cribed its inexpediency, its inconveniences, and  
“ its dangers; (dangers, especially of the same sort  
“ with those which I have hinted at to-day;) but  
“ we declared that although we could not overlook  
“ those dangers, those inconveniences, and that  
“ inexpediency, in a case in which remote interest  
“ and doubtful policy were alone assigned as  
“ motives for war; we would cheerfully affront  
“ them all, in a case, — if it should arrive, —  
“ where national faith, or national honour were  
“ concerned. Well, then, — a case *has* now  
“ arisen, of which the essence is faith, of which  
“ the character is honour. And when we call  
“ upon Parliament, not for offensive war,—which  
“ was proposed to us in 1823,—but for defensive  
“ armament; we are referred to our abstinence  
“ in 1823, as disqualifying us for exertion at the  
“ present moment: and are told, that because  
“ we did not attack France on that occasion, we

“ must not defend Portugal on this. I, Sir, like  
 “ the proposers of the Amendment, place the  
 “ two cases of 1823 and 1826 side by side, and  
 “ deduce from them, when taken together, the  
 “ exposition, and justification of our general  
 “ policy.

“ I appeal from the imputed tameness of  
 “ 1823, to the Message of to-night, in illustration  
 “ of the nature of those motives, by which a  
 “ Government generally pacifick may neverthe-  
 “ less be roused into action.”

The most important part of Mr. Canning's reply is that, in which he answers Sir Robert Wilson and Mr. Baring on the subject of the French occupation of the Peninsula. From the very time when that occupation took place Mr. Canning had felt that it was a “disparagement” to this Country. But, as has been already stated, he well knew that France derived from it any thing but advantage, and that Great Britain by the recognition of the independence of Spanish America had obtained more than a compensation for its prolongation. To vindicate his policy by thus explaining it, he well knew must be very inconvenient to the French Ministers, with whom he was sincerely desirous of having a cordial good understanding. It was for this reason that he had in the course of this year (1826) earnestly exhorted the French Government to withdraw their troops from the Peninsula, and had fairly

warned them that the time might come when, unless he were able positively to name the period of their evacuation, he might be compelled, for his own justification, to show the people of England, that if we had endured disparagement, we were not without compensation.

Accordingly when it was averred that “by the occupation of Spain by France the relative situation of Great Britain and France was altered — that France was thereby exalted and Great Britain lowered in the eyes of Europe,” Mr. Canning “begged leave to dissent from that averment. The House,” he said, “knows — the country knows — that when the French army was on the point of entering Spain *His Majesty’s Government did all in their power to prevent it*; that we resisted it by all means short of war. There were many reasons already stated why the King’s Government did not think the entry of that army into Spain a sufficient ground for war, but there was in addition this peculiar reason, — that whatever effect a war commenced upon the mere ground of the entry of a French army into Spain might have, it would probably not have had the effect of getting that army out again.

“But,” continued Mr. Canning, “I think that the effects of the French occupation of Spain have been infinitely exaggerated.

" I do not blame those exaggerations, be-  
 " cause I am aware that they are to be attributed  
 " to the recollections of some of the best times  
 " of our history ; that they are the echoes of sen-  
 " timents, which in the days of William and of  
 " Anne, animated the debates, and dictated the  
 " votes of the British Parliament. No peace  
 " was in those days thought safe for this Country,  
 " while the crown of Spain continued on the  
 " head of a Bourbon. But were not the appre-  
 " hensions of those days greatly overstated ? —  
 " Has the power of Spain swallowed up the  
 " power of maritime England ? — Or does Eng-  
 " land still remain, after the lapse of more than a  
 " century, during which the crown of Spain has  
 " been worn by a Bourbon, — niched in a nook  
 " of that same Spain — Gibraltar ; an occupation  
 " which was contemporaneous with the appre-  
 " hensions that I have described, and which has  
 " happily survived them ?

" Again, Sir, — is the Spain of the present day  
 " the Spain of which the Statesmen of the times  
 " of William and Anne were so much afraid ?  
 " Is it indeed the Nation whose puissance was  
 " expected to shake England from her sphere ?  
 " No, Sir, it was quite another Spain — it was  
 " the Spain, within the limits of whose empire  
 " the sun never set — it was Spain '*with the*  
 " '*Indies*' that excited the jealousies and alarmed  
 " the imaginations of our ancestors.

“ But then, Sir, the balance of power! — The  
“ entry of the French army into Spain disturbed  
“ that balance, and we ought to have gone to  
“ war to restore it! I have already said, that  
“ when the French army entered Spain, we  
“ might, if we chose, have resisted or resented  
“ that measure by war. But were there no other  
“ means than war for restoring the balance of  
“ power? — Is the balance of power a fixed and  
“ unalterable standard? Or is it not a standard  
“ perpetually varying, as civilization advances,  
“ and as new nations spring up, and take their  
“ place among established political communities?  
“ The balance of power a century and a half  
“ ago was to be adjusted between France and  
“ Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, and England.  
“ Some years afterwards, Russia assumed her  
“ high station in European politics. Some years  
“ after that again, Prussia became not only a  
“ substantive, but a preponderating monarchy.  
“ Thus, while the balance of power continued in  
“ principle the same, the means of adjusting it  
“ became more varied and enlarged. They be-  
“ came enlarged, in proportion to the increased  
“ number of considerable States, — in proportion,  
“ I may say, to the number of weights which  
“ might be shifted into the one, or the other  
“ scale. To look to the policy of Europe, in the  
“ times of William and Anne, for the purpose of  
“ regulating the balance of power in Europe at

“ the present day, is to disregard the progress of  
“ events, and to confuse dates, and facts, which  
“ throw a reciprocal light upon each other.

“ It would be disingenuous, indeed, not to  
“ admit that the entry of the French army into  
“ Spain was, in a certain sense, a disparagement  
“ — an affront to the pride, — a blow to the feel-  
“ ings of England : — and it can hardly be sup-  
“ posed that the Government did not sympathize,  
“ on that occasion, with the feelings of the people.  
“ But I deny that, questionable or censurable as  
“ the act might be, it was one which necessarily  
“ called for our direct, and hostile opposition.  
“ Was nothing then to be done? — Was there no  
“ other mode of resistance, than by a direct attack  
“ upon France — or by a War to be undertaken  
“ on the soil of Spain? What, if the possession  
“ of Spain might be rendered harmless in rival  
“ hands — harmless as regarded us — and value-  
“ less to the possessors ; might not compensation  
“ for disparagement be obtained, and the policy  
“ of our ancestors vindicated, by means better  
“ adapted to the present time? If France oc-  
“ cupied Spain, was it necessary, in order to  
“ avoid the consequences of that occupation,  
“ — that we should blockade Cadiz? No. I  
“ looked another way — I sought materials of  
“ compensation in another hemisphere. Con-  
“ templating Spain, such as our ancestors had  
“ known her, I resolved that if France had

“ Spain, it should not be Spain ‘ *with the Indies.*’ I called the New World into existence, to redress the balance of the Old.

“ It is thus, Sir, that I answer the accusation brought against His Majesty’s Government, of having allowed the French army to usurp, and to retain the occupation of Spain. That occupation, I am quite confident, is an unpaid, and unredeemed burden to France. It is a burden of which, I verily believe, France would be glad to rid herself. But they know little of the feelings of the French Government, and of the spirit of the French nation, who do not know, that, worthless or burdensome as that occupation may be, the way to rivet her in it, would be by angry or intemperate representations, to make the continuance of that occupation a point of honour.

“ In conclusion,” he said “ I shall only once more declare, that the object of the Address, which I propose to you, is not war:— its object is to take the last chance of peace. If you do not go forth, on this occasion to the aid of Portugal, Portugal will be trampled down, to your irretrievable disgrace: and then will come war in the train of national degradation. If, under circumstances like these, you wait till Spain has matured her secret machinations into open hostility, you will in a little while have the sort of war

“ required by the pacifiers : — and who shall  
“ say where that war will end ? ”

This explanation of our foreign policy produced the happiest effects on the House of Commons and the Country. Notwithstanding the general anxiety of all parties to maintain peace, they all concurred in lauding the measure. Mr. Joseph Hume was almost the only individual who remained unsatisfied, and persevered in his opposition to the Address which Mr. Canning had proposed.

The effect at Paris of the Speech was even more important. The part which related to the occupation of Spain by France, was somewhat embarrassing to the French Ministers — a consequence which Mr. Canning would gladly have prevented, had it been possible. But it was that part, which more than any other had contributed to the union of sentiment, between the people and the Government, had secured the approbation of the whole population of the United Kingdom, and placed Great Britain in an attitude, which made a deep impression on the minds of neighbouring nations. The exposure of the tremendous consequences which would inevitably result from a war, at that period, told exactly in the manner in which it was intended. The most violent of the Congregationalists indeed were loud in their censures, and persevering in their misrepresentations.

They asserted that Mr. Canning had appealed to the discontented of all nations, and that his language was that of an infuriated Jacobin, rather than of a British Statesman. But the fury of the Congregationists exhausted itself in these false and intemperate accusations ; and the French Ministers, who but a short time before had hardly ventured to recall from Madrid M. de Moustiers, the chief instigator of all the mischief, because that Ambassador was supported by the ultra party, were now able to adopt a decisive tone, and to show both by their words and their actions, that they would fearlessly do their utmost to prevent a collision, of the disastrous consequences of which Mr. Canning had given the world so salutary a warning.

The Speech of the King of France at the opening of the Chambers was of a very pacifick Character. But the able address of the Baron de Damas to the House of Peers was that which gave the most unequivocal proof of the resolution of himself, and his colleagues not to allow France to be drawn into a war, by the miserable intrigues and treacherous hostilities of the French and Spanish Apostolicals. M. de Damas handsomely defended the conduct of the British Government towards Portugal, declaring that it was justified by right, and prescribed by duty. He condemned the proceedings of Spain, declared that She had acted in contempt of the advice of his Govern-

ment, which had fairly warned Ferdinand that he must not look for succour from France. In the course of the debate in which M. de Damas delivered this Speech, several of the Ultras fiercely attacked Mr. Canning. He was, however, most ably defended by the leaders of the opposite party. Amongst the number of the assailants was the Viscount de Chateaubriand, who, from having been the chief promoter of the invasion of the Peninsula, and having prognosticated that France would derive from it the greatest advantages, seemed to feel it incumbent upon him to defend this favourite stroke of his policy. The noble Peer joined the cry of the Congregationists respecting Mr. Canning's observations on a war of opinion. He, however, could only have thus interpreted this passage, because he did not correctly understand it. By the party whose example M. de Chateaubriand followed, the misinterpretation was probably wilful. Mr. Canning, indeed, had expressed the very same idea in the Speech which he made on the invasion of Spain by France in 1823. He then observed, that "it was perfectly true, that "there was a contest going on in the world "between the spirit of unlimited monarchy, "and the spirit of unlimited democracy. Be- "tween these two spirits it might be said, that "strife was either openly in action, or secretly

“at work throughout the greater portion of Europe.

“Let us then,” he said, “be ready to afford refuge to the sufferers of either extreme party ; but it is surely not our policy to become the associate of either.”

The passage, then, which M. de Chaubriand joined in representing, as a summons to discontent, was only a more distinct warning to the advocates of unlimited monarchy, to beware, not to assail Great Britain in a way which would compel Her, against Her will, to become the associate of the adverse party.

There were, however, others not only in France, but in England, who thought that the discussions of such topics would serve but to increase the dangers of which they treated. But this was a narrow view of the subject. Mr. Canning told those, from whom danger was apprehended, nothing which they did not know before ; and so far from holding out to them any encouragement to realize the horrors at which he hinted, he distinctly cautioned them that such an attempt would convert England into their foe. But, on the other hand, to the Apostolicals of Europe he disclosed a secret, and by so doing saved them from the destruction which, through blindness, they were ready to brave. The warning changed the whole tone of their correspondence throughout Europe ; and Prince

Metternich himself, starting with dismay at the schemes which he had meditated, professed entirely to approve of the King's message. The French Ministers thus freed from the goadings, both of their own Ultras and the Austrian Government, — goadings, which on a former occasion had driven them into the invasion of Spain — steadily continued their straight-forward course. They exhorted the Spanish Government to retrace its steps, and to take advantage of the “*locus penitentiae*” which the forbearance of England had left open. They insisted on the immediate recognition by Spain of the Portuguese Regency, and the fulfilment of the treaties by the Spanish Government between the two Countries. The withdrawal of the Swiss guards from Madrid was to be the direct consequence of a refusal by Spain to comply with these exhortations.

While events were taking this satisfactory turn in France, Mr. Canning was waiting in anxious suspense to learn the effect produced by the King's message at Lisbon, and by the subsequent arrival of the troops. The accounts from thence were very unpropitious; an attempt had been made by the ultra liberals, in the beginning of December, to seize the reins of power, and some strong philippicks had been pronounced in the lower Chamber against the Ministers, who all in consequence resigned. In a short time,

however, the Deputies returned to the line of moderation, and received the re-nomination of Don Francisco d'Almeida and the Baron de Johal almost ~~in~~ with acclamation. It was just possible that before the determination of the British Government reached Portugal, the success of the rebels might have been complete, and Lisbon have fallen into their hands. This was fortunately not the case: except in Tras-os-Montes and at Lamego on the borders of that province, the inhabitants had shown no disaffection to the Constitutional cause, and in the commencement of the contest, the forces of the Regency under Count Villa Flor had driven the rebels, under Magessi (who had taken Villa Viciosa) back again from the Alentejo into Spain. In the North the Marquis of Chaves and Montealagre, after having got possession of the whole province of Tras-os-Montes, had made but very little progress in the adjoining province of Upper Beira, while that of Minho, in which Oporto is situated, had been effectually guarded by the forces of the Regency under General Claudino. In the mean while Magessi having again been allowed to recruit in Spain, and to march within the Spanish Frontiers northward, had re-entered Portugal, and joined the Marquis of Chaves in Upper Beira, thus making the forces of the rebel chiefs, together, amount to upwards of twelve thousand men. But nearly at the same

time that Magessi effected this junction with Chaves, the Count de Villa Flor likewise united his forces with those of General Claudino, so that the Royalist Army outnumbered its opponents.

The contending forces were thus situated when the news of the determination of the British Government to send troops dispirited the invaders, in the same proportion that it raised the hopes of the Constitutionalists, and confirmed the fidelity of the wavering.

The King's message reached Sir William à Court on the 21st of December, was made known to the publick on the 23d, and the Pyramus with the troops on board appeared in the Tagus on the 25th. The 23d being the last day on which the Cortes sat, that assembly passed by acclamation a vote of thanks to the King and People of Great Britain for the aid which they had sent. Mr. Canning's speech was translated, and several thousand copies were sold in the course of a few hours.

The presence of the British troops who had all arrived by the 1st of January enabled the Government to send an additional force against the rebels; and Count Villa Flor and General Claudino commenced offensive operations; the latter drove the advanced guard of the Marquis of Chaves, and Magessi from Viseu, and at last brought them to a pitched battle at Corruches, where they were completely defeated: their

commanders as usual taking refuge in Spain. Before the end of January, Portugal was almost entirely cleared of the invaders, and the triumph of the Government may be said to have been complete.

Lord Beresford, whose arrival at Lisbon has before been mentioned, left that capital on the 26th of January. The propositions which were made to him to obtain his services, not having been deemed by his Lordship of a nature to justify his granting them, his visit to Lisbon had been any thing but propitious to the Constitutional cause. Whatever might have been his own feelings towards the Charter, the individuals, with whom he associated himself, were loud in their condemnation of the new order of things, and were notorious for their ultra bigotry. Their unwarranted assertions before the arrival of the British troops, that England would not send aid, induced many to believe that such was the fixed determination of the British Cabinet. Language of this description coming from the confidential friends of Lord Beresford tended considerably to increase the ranks of the rebels.

The exhortations addressed by the French Government to the Court of Madrid have already been mentioned. When the determination to send the expedition to Portugal was taken, Mr. Lamb's discretionary powers to quit Madrid

were revoked ; lest, after so decisive a step, his coming away should have the appearance of being tantamount to a declaration of war by Great Britain against Spain, which was what Mr. Canning was most anxious to avoid.

The remonstrances of France and the British expedition seemed once again to bring the Spanish Government to reason. Ferdinand consented to recognize the Regency, to accredit an Ambassador to the Infanta, and to receive a Chargé d'Affaires from Her, — all of which he actually performed.

In the course of January the Spanish Government voluntarily renewed its assurances to the British Cabinet that the rebels should be disarmed ; and gave the most satisfactory assurances of good behaviour for the future. But these assurances were again violated with the same shameless perfidy, as those by which they had been preceded, and the rebels, who had fled defeated from Corruches were again received, again organized by Spanish authorities, and again sent in hostile array into Portugal with no inconsiderable portion of Spanish soldiers enrolled in their ranks. On this fresh outrage the British army marched northwards, as far as Coimbra, to support the forces of the Regency ; who once again routed the rebels, and drove them back into Spain. The utter failure of this new experiment induced the Spanish Govern-

ment at last to give up its treacherous system, and on the present occasion the retreating troops "were really "disarmed and dispersed." Chaves and Magessi were not only ordered, but were actually made, to quit the Spanish territory, and General Longa, the Governor of Badajoz under whose protection the enterprizes had been encouraged and aided, was directed to be brought to a court-martial.

Notwithstanding these proceedings, all cause of alarm was not extinguished, for a large Spanish force was still left assembled on the frontiers, under the pretence of repelling any attacks from Portugal. But a rebellion, which broke out against Ferdinand, with the avowed object of placing his brother Don Carlos on the Throne, drew the King's attention from the affairs of that Country to the eastern portions of his own kingdom.

Thus then the object for which the expedition was sent from the shores of Great Britain was completely attained. Portugal was defended from hostile aggression by the prompt assistance of Her ally.

But although thus saved from Her greatest danger, others still surrounded Her. The proceedings of the Chambers in the Session which was held at the commencement of 1827 were of the most unpromising nature. During the greater part of that Session, many of the Peers had entered into a systematick opposition to the

Chamber of Deputies, and the Ministers were unable to lead in either of the Chambers. The uncertainty which prevailed, as well with respect to the ultimate authority which Don Miguel might acquire in the Government, as with regard to how he would use it, prevented all those who were lukewarm in the cause of the Constitution from giving it a cordial support, while its enemies sought by sowing disunion between the two Chambers to discredit the system by making it ridiculous through its inefficiency. The Chambers, however, certainly had the merit of abstaining from all extravagant excess, and manifested no disposition to encroach upon the prerogatives of the Crown. They were prorogued at the end of March in the name of the Infanta, by the Bishop of Viseu, Her Royal Highness being at that time seriously indisposed. In the beginning of May her indisposition increased so much that, for some time, her life was despaired of, and for many weeks she was wholly unable to attend to business. The condition of Her Royal Highness served but to augment the weakness of the Government. In the event of the Infanta's death, the Regency would have fallen to her aunt, an old woman, who had been living many years in a Convent, and in default of that old lady, to the Queen Mother. Meanwhile the state of the finances did not allow the Government to provide for the pay of the

troops ; and the garrison of Elvas, discontented with their situation, and acted upon by the intrigues of Spain, mutinied in favour of Don Miguel. The energy of the Governor of that town soon suppressed the mutiny ; which became the occasion of bringing back to the Ministry of War, Saldanha, who had been Governor of Oporto, when the Constitution first arrived, and who had shortly after been promoted to that department. He was a staunch Constitutional, and to him the Government were indebted for having put down the rebellion in the Algarves in the preceding October. After he had performed that service he had been seized with an alarming illness, and tendered a temporary resignation of his situation. His post had been held, *ad interim*, first, by the Marquis de Valeuca, and, second, by Don Candido Xavier. When Saldanha heard of the mutiny at Elvas, he returned to the War Office, and demanding the seals of that department from Don Candido, reinstated himself, without the authority of the Regent (who indeed was too ill to give it) ; and without the consent of his colleagues, who took great offence at his thus acting by himself. Saldanha therefore declared that either he, or they, must retire ; and the Infanta, having by the beginning of June recovered sufficiently to attend to publick affairs, he succeeded in displacing his colleagues, and a

new Ministry was named, in which the Marquis of Palmella, then Ambassador in England, was selected for the Office of Foreign Affairs. His Excellency, however, wisely declined to act, except on the condition, that the system on which the Cabinet had been going on, each member of it acting independently of the others, should be abandoned, and that no measure but what had received the sanction of the whole council should be submitted to Her Royal Highness for her approval.

While the Ministry remained thus unsettled, plots were renewed against the Constitution. A part of the garrison of Lisbon were detected by Saldanha, on the eve of desertion. There being reason to suppose that Bastos, the intendant of Police, was privy to this plot, Saldanha insisted upon his removal, to which the Infanta consented: but, before she signed the decree, intriguers got around her, and instead of dismissing Bastos, she dismissed Saldanha.

This step produced popular discontents both at Lisbon and Oporto. Several of the Liberal journals condemned the measure, and Bastos, who continued in power, commenced prosecutions against their editors. Santarem, a nephew of Saldanha's, was appointed his successor; but he had not been long in office before he was in his turn displaced: various changes subsequently took place, till at last, at the beginning of July,

the Cabinet of the Regent was reduced to three Members, each holding two Departments.

During these last few months the change of the Government in England prevented Mr. Canning from giving much of his attention to the affairs of Portugal. When Parliament was prorogued, those of Greece were the more pressing of the two. So soon, however, as the Greek treaty of July was arranged Mr. Canning turned his mind to Portugal. The particular object of his policy with respect to that Country had always been to preserve an influence with its Government, and thereby to ameliorate its internal condition. He found Great Britain bound to Portugal by the closest ties of defensive alliance, and commercial stipulation, so that British interests were deeply involved in those of Portugal. So long, therefore, as these treaties were in force, it was matter of direct concern to us that the Portuguese Government should neither be under the influence of any other Nation, nor in itself indisposed to British connexion.

Since then the established Constitutional Government was acknowledged to be the legitimate Government of the Country, Mr. Canning considered that Great Britain had a right to exert Her influence in preventing its subversion by Don Miguel, who, together with his partizans, notoriously cherished towards this country an inveterate hatred.

To avert this consummation without active interference was a task of some difficulty. Nevertheless, since the Infant could not obtain absolute power without a flagrant violation both of the Constitution, to which he had sworn, and the fundamental laws of the Monarchy, Mr. Canning looked with confidence to the preservation of the then established order of things, provided only that there was steadily bestowed on its support the moral countenance of the British Government. For this end it was necessary to resolve some of the complications which then existed ; the most important of which arose, first from the separation from Brazil never having been completed, and the inclination manifested by Don Pedro to retain his hold by delaying his abdication. Secondly, by the partizans of Don Miguel and some of the European Powers maintaining that he had a right to the Regency in the ensuing October, when His Royal Highness would attain the age of twenty-five.

For the solution of these difficulties the first thing which Mr. Canning considered essential was the final separation of Portugal from Brazil, in compliance with the stipulations of the treaty of independence which had been negotiated under the auspices of Great Britain. Till that question was settled it was impossible to decide the question of the Regency. The publick acts of Portugal all ran in the name of Don Pedro.

The Infanta was Regent, not by virtue of the Charter, but by delegation of Don Pedro ; and before Don Miguel could have a right under the Charter to the Regency, it was necessary, not only that he should be twenty-five years old, but that Don Pedro should have abdicated, and his daughter should have been proclaimed Queen ; for Don Miguel's right was founded on there being a minor on the Throne, and until that contingency happened, it was clear he had no legitimate claim. Whenever the time should come when that legitimate claim was fairly established, Mr. Canning had no wish to interpose any obstacles to the assumption of the Regency by Don Miguel, "provided sufficient guarantees could be obtained for his performance of the conditions on which alone he would be entitled to enjoy it."

The weakness arising from the uncertainty respecting the Regency was the main cause of all the embarrassments in which the question was involved ; but the first step essential to terminating that uncertainty was, the completion of the separation between the two Countries and the Crown of Portugal being placed on the head of the young Princess. To obtain this complete separation England, from the part which she took in the negotiation of the treaty, had a right actively to interfere. But before she took any decided steps, Mr. Canning thought it would be

right to wait for intelligence from Rio, as to the measures which the Emperor would take when he learnt that Don Miguel had positively declined to undertake the voyage to Brazil.

Such were Mr. Canning's views with respect to Portugal at the period of his death. The last state paper which he composed related to this subject.

## CHAP. XVI.

**GREEK AFFAIRS. — MEASURES RESPECTING THE GREEK PROTOCOL. — CORRESPONDENCE WITH PRINCE LIEVEN. — INSTRUCTIONS TO MR. STRATFORD CANNING. — COMMUNICATIONS WITH FRANCE, AUSTRIA, AND PRUSSIA. — REJECTION BY THE PORTE OF MR. STRATFORD CANNING'S OVERTURE. — SUCCESS OF THE TURKS IN GREECE. — GREEK TREATY AND SECRET ARTICLE. — INSTRUCTIONS TO THE AMBASSADORS AT CONSTANTINOPLE, AND TO THE COMMANDERS OF THE ALLIED SQUADRONS IN THE LEVANT. — MR. CANNING'S "SYSTEM" OF POLICY.**

BEFORE resuming the history of the steps which were taken with reference to the Protocol on Greek affairs, signed at St. Petersburgh on the 4th of April by the Duke of Wellington, it may be well briefly to recall to the mind of the reader, the principles, by which up to this period Mr. Canning's policy had been guided, in the course of this very difficult, and intricate question.

In the early stages of the contest, whilst its effects were confined within the limits of the Turkish dominions, Mr. Canning held that Great Britain was “ bound in political justice to respect in the case of Turkey, that national independence, which in case of civil commotion, “ she would look to have respected in her own.”

In process of time it became necessary, from the duration and magnitude of the war, to allow to the Greeks the rights of a belligerent. And furthermore, Russia being authorized by treaty to interfere, as a friendly Power, in behalf of the Rayah subjects of the Porte, Mr. Canning did not object, on condition, first, of those friendly relations being restored, and, second, of a joint disavowal of force, to a British Minister taking part in the conference on Greek affairs, which was to be called together, for the purpose of inducing the other Powers of Europe to add their weight to that of Russia in the representations which the Court of St. Petersburg contemplated making to the Divan.

When, however, Mr. Canning found that both belligerents indignantly rejected the plan of pacification, which that conference was to discuss, he would not pretend to entertain hopes of the success of an intervention, of which he was convinced of the futility, and, consequently, he declined all participation in the conference.

But after Mr. Stratford Canning’s arrival in the

Archipelago, on his way to Constantinople, when one of the Belligerents had asked for the good offices of England, the grounds for interference were totally changed.

A requisition of this nature from one or other of the parties was an event, which Mr. Canning had foreseen, and for which he had waited. The mediation was no longer to be forced upon both, but was earnestly sought by one of them ; and no reason existed why Great Britain should refuse to undertake the task. For if, as Mr. Canning said before the Greeks made their requisition, our mediation “ is asked by one “ party, it shall be offered to the other.” So soon, therefore, as he heard of this application, he forthwith instructed Mr. Stratford Canning to tender our single mediation to the Porte in her quarrel with her Greek subjects. The intervention of Great Britain afforded the best chance of its termination, which alone could render Turkey secure against the attack of Russia. The acceptance of this offer by the Porte was exceedingly doubtful; and Mr. Canning, anxious to prevent the rejection of a second offer, in case the first should be declined, thought the best chance of its acceptance would be, to work upon the fears of the Divan (the only means of effectually influencing the proceedings of the Turkish Ministers), by convincing them that England was, in the Greek question, acting in concert with the

Russian Government, and that she would not involve Herself in a war, in order to defend Turkey from hostilities, which Her own obstinacy would have provoked.

That the second proposition might be ready to succeed the first, the Duke of Wellington was authorized to come to some confidential separate understanding with the Russian Government. But it was not considered necessary, as the price of this understanding, to exact either the restoration of the Russian mission at the Porte, or the abnegation of force; since the application of one of the belligerents for British mediation had given Great Britain that right of amicable intervention, which Mr. Canning had thought it essential that Russia should acquire by restoring Her mission, before she could call in Her Allies to advise and to co-operate: and since it was impossible to require a disavowal of force when the British Government itself contemplated forcible interference to prevent the realization of the designs, which were imputed to Ibrahim Pacha. Nevertheless the Protocol of the 4th of April, which was the produce of His Grace's exertions, did provide against the attempts of any party to gain territorial aggrandizement, undue influence, or exclusive commercial privileges.

The last Article of that document contained an agreement, on the part of its signers, to propose to their Continental Allies, to join, in giving

their aid to carry into effect the stipulations of the preceding articles.

This idea for the co-operation of the Allies was suggested by Mr. Canning.

But it must not be supposed that he therefore (as was subsequently asserted by Prussia) gave any “countenance to the principle of an unasked “authoritative interference by the Alliance.” That Alliance no longer acted in a body: but had been resolved into individuality by the steady manner in which Mr. Canning had not only denied, but acted in defiance of its principles. Russia, its great supporter, was then linked with England, and Nicholas had declared that he considered it a point of honour to have nothing more to do with his Continental Allies, on Greek affairs.

To collect together the parties who had been Members of that Alliance, for the sake of a corporate movement in a particular case, was a very different thing from admitting in principle a standing corporate authority. To procure the aid of the Allies in a *solicited* intervention, of which the objects were limited and defined, was essentially distinct from an intervention, which was not only unasked, but repudiated, and of which the end, and the consideration, were left unlimited, and undefined.

We must now proceed to record the measures successively adopted by Mr. Canning for the purpose of securing this co-operation.

The Russian Ambassador's absence from England having been prolonged until the month of August, nothing was done with respect to the Protocol until His Excellency's return. All the Allies, however, had been made acquainted with the nature of that instrument by the Russian Ministers, who had privately made known to the Allies, very soon after its signature, the fact, that England and Russia had entered into an agreement on the affairs of Greece, as well as the substance of the agreement.

A few days after the Ambassador's arrival, Mr. Canning proceeded to concert with His Excellency the manner in which they should proceed with the Protocol. After a short discussion, it was agreed that the first step should be to furnish the Courts of Paris, Vienna, and Berlin with an official copy, and that the Russian and British Representatives at those Courts should make the communication, either jointly, or separately, as they might deem expedient; but, at any rate, contemporaneously, in order that there should be every appearance of what in reality existed — a complete and cordial understanding between the Courts of St. Petersburg and St. James's on the subject on which they were co-operating. The communication was not to preclude, but, on the other hand, was not to invite an answer.

A communication was accordingly made jointly by the Representatives of Russia and

England to the Foreign Secretaries of France, Austria, and Prussia.

The French Government expressed generally its satisfaction at this proceeding. The Austrian Ministers promised forthwith to lay it before their Imperial Master, whom they described as perfectly agreeing with Russia and England, in the importance of the peace of Europe not being disturbed. With respect to the guarantee, they said that the Emperor would wish to learn the results of the negotiation, before he could decide to undertake it; but Austria entertained an anxious hope that the efforts of the Russian and British Courts would be successful in restoring tranquillity to Greece. The Prussian Ministers declared the satisfaction of their Court at finding, that the Protocol rested upon the same principles as those entertained at the conferences of St. Petersburgh in the preceding year; and that Great Britain had at last placed herself upon the same line (*sur la même ligne*) as was then proposed by her continental Allies. In reply to these observations Mr. Canning pointed out to the Court of Berlin that it was a great mistake to suppose, that the principles, upon which he was then acting, were the same as those, on which the Allies had held their conferences at St. Petersburgh. The essential distinction between them has been already explained.

This first step being thus taken, the next thing

to be settled was, to what lengths the British and Russian Governments would be disposed to go in order to carry into effect the stipulations, of the Protocol.

But it was first necessary to determine, whether the proposal made to the Porte should be in conformity with the conditions defined in the Protocol, or with those to which the Greeks, in asking the mediation of Great Britain, had declared themselves willing to accede.

There was indeed little material difference between the two instruments, and it was therefore agreed that the British Ambassador should lay before the Turkish Government the propositions of the Greek letter, whereby he would not only conform his proceedings to the spirit of the Protocol, but would bring forward in effect nearly all the stipulations of that instrument.

It was to be left to the discretion of the Ambassador to select the fit opportunity for making this overture, so far as that selection depended upon the state of things at Constantinople.

At the time when Mr. Canning was arranging with Prince Lieven the nature of the instructions to be given to the British Ambassador at the Porte, the issue of the negotiations at Ackermann was uncertain. It was necessary, therefore, to determine the course to be pursued in the event

of their success on the one hand, or their failure on the other.

In the first hypothesis it was agreed that M. de Ribeaupierre should co-operate avowedly, directly, " and cordially, in the overtures of Mr. " Stratford Canning, as being the plan most " conformable to the spirit of the Protocol, and " most likely to be conducive to its success.

" The Greek letter was nevertheless to be " the basis of the overture, because from that " alone Mr. Stratford Canning derived the " authority to speak confidently of the wishes " and intentions of the Greeks; and conse- " quently the means of defeating the pretext put " forward by the Turkish Government, that, " even if the Porte were disposed to pacification, " there was no assurance of a reciprocal dispo- " sition on the part of its revolted subjects."

In order, however, to induce the Porte, more readily to listen to the proposed overture, the Protocol of April was to be announced at the same time to the Turkish Government, as constituting the pledge of co-operation between Russia and England; and the Reis Effendi was to be informed that the overture had been delayed for the purpose of obtaining the benefit of this co-operation.

Furthermore, the near coincidence " between " what was agreed upon at St. Petersburgh in " April by the Plenipotentiaries of Russia and

“ England, as the extent of the concessions to be  
 “ reasonably required for the Greeks, with what  
 “ the Greeks, at nearly the same moment, were  
 “ agreeing upon at Napoli di Romania, as that  
 “ which would satisfy them, might be fairly stated  
 “ at once as an indication of the altered temper  
 “ of the Greeks, and of the indisposition of the  
 “ two Allied Powers to lend themselves to pre-  
 “ tensions, unnecessarily in opposition to the  
 “ interests of the Ottoman Empire.”

In the second hypothesis, viz. the failure of the negotiations at Ackermann, viewed simply “ with  
 “ reference to the Protocol, although it was  
 “ obvious that the effect of war between Russia  
 “ and Turkey (if war were to be the immediate  
 “ consequence of that failure) would be to  
 “ deprive the British Ambassador at the Porte of  
 “ any assistance from direct Russian co-operation,  
 “ yet the third article of the Protocol was still to  
 “ be considered as obligatory on Russia.

“ Moreover, the self-denying engagements by  
 “ which the two High Contracting Parties had  
 “ bound themselves to each other were also to  
 “ continue in force.”

Again, in the event “ of the Porte showing  
 “ herself inaccessible to any propositions relative  
 “ to Greece, it was agreed, supposing that the  
 “ negotiations” at Ackermann terminated favour-  
 ably, and, consequently, that a Russian Mission  
 was re-established at Constantinople, that Russia

and England should recommend to their Allies to join them, first, in “ threatening the Porte with “ a simultaneous withdrawal of the Christian “ Missions, upon an obstinate rejection of the “ Divan of all proposals of pacification, and “ further if such a powerful appeal to the pride, “ as well as to the prudence of the Grand “ Seignor, had no effect, the threat was to be “ carried into execution.”

In the contingency that the Sultan still continued inflexible, it was agreed to resort to the recognition of the independence of Greece: a step which it has been already mentioned the Austrian Government recommended to the adoption of the Allies at the conferences of St. Petersburgh in the spring of 1825, and “ which, “ if it were justifiable under the circumstances of “ that period, could not but be much more “ clearly so, after two additional years of ravage “ and bloodshed had fruitlessly desolated Greece; “ and after the Greeks had proved themselves “ capable of maintaining for the same length of “ time a national struggle for independence.”

It was therefore determined to intimate to the Turks that Great Britain and Russia would “ look to Greece with an eye of favour, and with “ a disposition to seize the first occasion of recognizing, as an independent State, such portion “ of her territory as should have freed itself from “ Turkish dominion; provided that such State

“ should have shown itself substantially capable  
 “ of maintaining an independent existence, of  
 “ carrying on a Government of its own, of con-  
 “ trolling its own military and naval forces, and  
 “ of being responsible to other Nations for the  
 “ observance of international laws and the dis-  
 “ charge of international duties.”

Such were the measures suggested \* by Mr. Canning to Prince Lieven, whereby he hoped to conquer the obstinacy of the Divan, while he avoided the extremity of war, an extremity for having recourse to which, Mr. Canning distinctly declared that the British Government could not consider the refusal of the Porte to listen to proposals for an accommodation with Greece, as affording any justifiable grounds. But although the British Government did not consider such a refusal “ as giving a right of war against the Porte, it did conceive the continuance of a contest so ferocious in its details, and so hopeless of termination, and leading to excesses of piracy and plunder so intolerable to civilized Europe, to be an evil of so extraordinary a character, as to justify extraordinary interposition ; and to render lawful any expedients short of positive hostility for impressing upon the recusant party the necessity of a reasonable accommodation.”

\* Sept. 4. 1826.

It was with this view that the British Ambassador had, as has been stated, brought before the Porte, "in general, but forcible, terms, the dangers which she incurred from the continuance of the piratical excesses in the Archipelago."

It was with this view that the intimation with respect to the plan of Ibrahim Pacha had been left suspended, but ready to be carried into execution, if what was then only matter of suspicion, should ever become matter of proof. And, lastly, it was with this view that Mr. Canning agreed with Prince Lieven in consenting to the discontinuance of diplomatick relations with the Porte, and the recognition of Greek independence.

These preliminaries being settled, there was yet wanting, before they could be definitively acted upon, the sanction of the Russian Government.

Until that sanction could be obtained, Mr. Stratford Canning was instructed simply to present a note to the Porte, detailing the particulars of the Greek propositions, and inviting the speedy and serious attention of the Divan to the subject; discretion being given to him to propose an armistice, or not, accordingly as he might think it advisable.

At the same time it was determined to make, through the same channel as the former, a second communication to the Allies, of documents showing the position of affairs at Constantinople, and

the application addressed to Mr. Stratford Canning by the Provisional Government of Greece.

The French Government received this second communication with the same verbal expressions of satisfaction, with which it acknowledged the former; and subsequently addressed a note to the two Ambassadors, describing the pleasure which His Most Christian Majesty felt at such a mark of confidence on the part of his Allies, and the interest with which he had watched the progress of the transaction. "The King of France," it was said in conclusion, "in the full expectation that the subsequent measures relative to the Protocol would be decided upon in the same spirit, would be prepared to assist in whatever was likely to bring about an arrangement, for which he had long been anxious."

The same communication being made to the Austrian and Prussian Ministers, the former received it, undertaking to lay it before the Emperor; the latter refused to receive the note from the English Minister, assigning, as a reason (if such a pretension can be so designated), that the note was written in the language of the Country, of which the individual writing it was the representative!

In the interval which elapsed between the transmission of the arrangements agreed upon, to St. Petersburg, and the return of the answer of

the Russian Court, Mr. Canning paid a visit \* to the French metropolis. The subjects which occupied his attention during his stay there related principally to the affairs of Western Europe ; but those of the East were not left wholly out of discussion. On these he found the French Ministers most desirous cordially to co-operate with Great Britain and Russia in the work of pacification. The King himself, manifested in behalf of the suffering Christians of Greece a chivalrous warmth of heart, a gallantry, and a generosity, which did honour to his character : and to the credit of the French Ministers it must be stated that the feelings of jealousy, and displeasure, which they had not unnaturally entertained, at the first moment, when they heard of the separate understanding between Russia and England, were not only completely removed by the explanations and subsequent conduct of those two Powers, but had been replaced by sentiments of most perfect confidence in the honesty and fairness of the motives of Mr. Canning. Before Mr. Canning left Paris he received information of the favourable issue of the negotiations at Ackermann, and of the sanction given by the Russian Court to the proceedings of its Ambassador in London ; but since it was not officially notified to Mr. Canning, he was only enabled to

apprise the French Ministers confidentially of the further measures which were in contemplation to break down the obstinacy of the Sultan.

On Mr. Canning's return to England the approbation of Russia was officially communicated, and at the same time Prince Lieven received authority to concert with the British Government respecting the further proceedings with the allied Courts, and the proposals to be made to them to join the English and Russian Ambassadors, in their representations, and ultimately, if necessary, in their threats to the Divan. The Prince proposed that the instructions to Mr. Stratford Canning should be the guide of M. de Ribeaupierre's conduct, with whom the former was to consult, concerning the best mode of inducing the Porte to accede to the Protocol, and to consent to the establishment of an armistice.

In answer to these observations Mr. Canning proposed that the Representatives of Russia and England should, as on the two previous occasions, act together in furnishing the Allies with further information, relative to the intention of the two Courts with regard to the Protocol : the information proposed to be given was, 1st, the determination of England and Russia, to withdraw their Representatives from Constantinople, if their Allies would consent to the same ; 2dly, the resolution to recognize any portion of Greece,

as independent, which should have actually freed itself from the presence of the Turks. This last resolution was one which both Russia and England could have executed alone; but since the advisableness of threatening or executing the first step depended on the concurrence of the Allies, Mr. Canning proposed that they should be invited to afford their co-operation.

This being assented to by Prince Lieven, the English and Prussian Ambassadors were instructed conjointly to express to the French Government the earnest hope of their respective Sovereigns, that the Court of France would be disposed to co-operate with the signing parties to the Protocol, since the greatest importance was attached by them to the co-operation of France in this work of reconciliation, and peace: more particularly the French Government was requested to take into its early consideration the proposal for the simultaneous withdrawal of the missions of the Allies, in the event of an obstinate refusal on the part of the Porte to listen to any plan of accommodation with the Greeks.

When Russia intimated Her approval of the measures suggested by Mr. Canning, to induce the Porte to admit the terms proposed in favour of the Greeks, She also urged the fitness of discussing the ulterior proceedings, which might be rendered necessary by the inflexibility of the Divan: declaring that the Emperor of Russia

had made up his mind, since he had begun to intermeddle in the Greek business, to bring it to a settlement ; for His Imperial Majesty thought it would be discreditable to the Powers, who had signed the Protocol, to allow themselves to be baffled in the execution of its stipulations.

Mr. Canning, in answer, endeavoured to moderate the warlike ardour of the Emperor. He repeated that Great Britain could not consider the rejection by the Porte of the proffered mediation, as a justifiable ground of hostilities ; nevertheless he observed, that although every effort should be used to secure the aid of the Allies, the enforcement of the stipulations of the Protocol would not be affected by their consent, or refusal ; since in the latter case the British Government was ready to act with Russia alone, for the purpose of bringing the work in question to the desired termination.

At the conclusion of these discussions Mr. Stratford Canning was instructed, —

1. That no official step should be taken towards the Turkish Government by himself and M. de Ribeaupierre united, until the resolution of the Allied Courts should be made known to them.

2. That the departure of the Ambassadors from Constantinople, was not to be threatened, unless all the Allies consented to join in it, and, even then, was not to be executed without reference home.

3. That if the Allies would not join, either in the threat to withdraw the Ambassadors, or to recognize the independence of Greece, then His Excellency was, without allusion to the Protocol, to bring forward singly the Greek propositions, which, at any rate, were to be brought forward, as a previous measure.

But in any case the tender of mediation was to be coupled with a proposition for an immediate armistice.

The impatience manifested by Russia to push matters to extremities induced Mr. Canning to let the French Government understand, that should the signing parties to the Protocol be disappointed in their expectations of the co-operation of their Allies, the Protocol itself would not therefore be considered as extinct. Its obligations would still survive, and the parties to it would consider of ulterior means for its execution.

This was not however necessary to induce the French Ministers to enter cordially into the views of England.

They at once approved of the principles of the Protocol; and subsequently in an official note announced, “the absolute and unqualified accession of the King of France to the Protocol, independently of that of the other Allies; “and His Most Christian Majesty’s readiness to “concur in the measures suggested by Great

“ Britain, and Russia, for giving effect to its stipulations.”

They also proposed the conversion of the Protocol into a Treaty; (a proposition, to which Mr. Canning had expressed his willingness to accede, at the time when the final communication had been made to the French Government;) and further stated it to be their opinion, that the arrangement to be concluded for Greece should be guaranteed by all the parties to the treaty, without exception.

Communications, similar to the one made to France, having been made to the Courts of Vienna and Berlin, the answer of the former was, that the Emperor was glad to find that the desire of England, and Russia, to bring about a pacification between Turkey and Greece was in accordance with his own. But that His Imperial Majesty objected to the measures which it was intended to pursue for procuring the compliance of the Porte: he considered that he would not be justified in menacing, still less in employing them, since he could never concur in a mediation, undertaken at the solicitation of the Greek insurgents, the object of which was to deprive the Sultan of his Sovereignty over a great part of Greece. Nevertheless the Emperor conceived it his duty to use his utmost exertions both with the Turks, and with the Greeks, to put an end to the hostilities between them; and he would there-

fore act with his Allies, in executing any measures which did not present to him “ insurmountable ‘‘ obstacles.” If, however, the objections of His Imperial Majesty to the measures proposed were removed by their abandonment, he would be willing to join his exertions to those of the other Powers. If, on the other hand, they should not be removed, he would endeavour singly to promote the success of the pacifick propositions of his Allies.

The answer of Prussia was not more satisfactory than that of Austria: and the reason assigned for not accepting the proposal was, that Prussia had little immediate interest in Eastern affairs,—the truth of which observation, it must be allowed, cannot well be controverted. The Prussian Envoy at Constantinople was, however, to be instructed to assist the representations of the Ambassadors and Ministers of the other Allied Courts, at Constantinople.

In consequence of the favourable reception given by France to the joint overtures of England and Russia, on the affairs of Greece, Mr. Canning at once authorized the British Ambassador, in conjunction with M. Pozzo di Borgo, to concert with the French Ministers the form of the instrument, into which they were desirous that the Protocol should be converted. With respect to the question of guarantee, Mr. Canning did not exactly understand to what points

the general guarantee proposed by France was intended to apply, and therefore he could not give any definitive answer, until he should be apprized of their precise nature: and even if it should be clearly understood that all the Powers who might become parties to the treaty should also become parties to the guarantee, the British Government would prefer that the continental Powers should take upon themselves the guarantee without the participation of Great Britain: nevertheless he was not prepared to say, that, if in other respects, there was a complete understanding, and accord, between all the Powers, as to the mode of carrying the Protocol into execution; and if the explanations from France, as to the guarantee, were precise, and satisfactory, the British Cabinet would not be induced to reconsider their first determination.

It was accordingly proposed to the French Foreign Secretary to draw up the *projet* of a treaty; and shortly after His Excellency produced one, which agreed, for the most part, with the provisions of the Protocol, but no allusion was made in the preamble to that instrument.

When\* this *projet* was received in London Mr. Canning was labouring under severe illness, which incapacitated him from attending to business. Before he had sufficiently recovered to

\* January 21. 1827.

resume his ordinary avocations, Lord Liverpool was seized with an apoplectick fit, an event by which the whole fabrick of the British Government was so shaken, that it put an end to any further progress in the settlement of the proposed Treaty. So soon, however, after the Government was settled, as Mr. Canning could find time to turn his mind from domestick, to foreign concerns, he again set to work to bring this matter to a conclusion ; but before that time arrived the composition of the Cabinet was materially changed.

On the renewal of the discussions, the impatience of the Emperor of Russia to settle the business was manifested by no equivocal symptoms. His Imperial Majesty again declared that it was absolutely necessary for the honour of those Governments, which were parties to the Protocol, to take care, that their intervention should be effectual ; and even so early as the month of February a plan had been prepared at St. Petersburgh, in which measures of coercion were recommended, in case the Porte should turn a deaf ear to all milder means of persuasion.

The concessions of the Turks at Ackermann had been to the Russian Army, if not to the Russian Government, any thing but a source of congratulation.

The Russian Government had gained those points of dispute with Turkey, which least in-

tered the feelings of the Russian people; and, while the Greek contest lasted, the warlike disposition of the army was as difficult to be controlled by the Emperor, as it was before the convention of Ackermann had deprived His Imperial Majesty of all pretence for waging war, to redress grievances purely Russian.

To restrain as much as possible the Emperor from yielding to the warlike propensities of his subjects, was still, as much as it ever had been, the anxious wish of Mr. Canning. But it seemed nevertheless certain, that, if the Greek contest were allowed to continue, without any efficient means being taken for its termination, Russia would not long be restrained from hostile interference.

The chances of success, resulting from the measures, which Mr. Canning had originally contemplated, were much diminished, if not wholly destroyed.

The refusal of Austria, on whose counsels the Divan relied, more than on those of any other Power, to accede to the Protocol, together with the same conduct on the part of Prussia, rendered nugatory the scheme for the withdrawal of the Christian Missions from Constantinople: — a scheme which, to render it effectual, required to be executed simultaneously by all of them.

So likewise the condition of Greece not being such as to justify recognition, as a measure of ne-

cessity, and peace, that step if taken would have been of a decidedly hostile character. But if hostilities were justifiable, was such a mode of carrying them on the most likely to bring the Porte to reason?

The treatment of the official overture made to the Porte by Mr. Stratford Canning, in conformity with his instructions, was not calculated to inspire much hope of the effect, which any menaces, short of coercion, were likely to produce. That Ambassador, on learning that Austria and Prussia would not join in the proposed measures, had determined on making his overture before M. de Ribeaupierre's arrival, and accordingly he sent in an official offer of *British* mediation. This proposition would not have admitted of any equal participation on the part of M. de Ribeaupierre; and since the refusal of Austria and Prussia would have prevented any other immediate step being taken on M. de Ribeaupierre's arrival, Mr. Stratford Canning thought that it would produce a bad impression on the Porte, either to leave that Minister in total inaction, while he was bringing forward his solitary offer, or to allow him, after so much expectation had been excited respecting him, to open his transactions with the Porte as a mere confidential auxiliary of the British Ambassador. On the other hand, no such objection applied to M. de Minciaky: Mr. Stratford Can-

ning therefore gave in his note a few days sooner than he had intended, in order to receive from the latter that confidential support (in testimony of the real sentiments of Russia) which he could neither entirely forego, nor without prejudice to the object in view, receive from M. de Ribeau-pierre. By this expedient an opportunity was afforded to the Divan of accepting the mediation of a friendly Power, without appearing to act either under a sense of intimidation, or out of condescension towards Russia.

But this proceeding, though wisely imagined, relaxed in no degree the obstinacy of the Porte. Mr. Stratford Canning was unsupported by all his Colleagues save M. de Minciaky. They pretended to disapprove of any step being taken, before the arrival of M. de Ribeau-pierre. That Minister, however, having reached Constantinople a few days after the overture in question had been made, entirely agreed with Mr. Stratford Canning as to its having afforded the best chance of success, without engaging him (M. de Ribeau-pierre) in a proceeding in which he could not have taken an equal part.

More than three weeks elapsed before any notice was taken of this offer: at length the Reis Effendi sent an intimation to the effect, that the Constitution of the Ottoman Empire rested upon the religion of the State; that the propositions made to the Sultan were contrary to the Koran,

and therefore that His Highness could not listen to them.

After this verbal answer had been given, the Reis Effendi continued to indulge in complaints with regard to Lord Cochrane, and other natives of Great Britain, engaged in the Greek service. The Porte continued to decline sending a written reply, while the language of the Reis Effendi was that of a man, who held our endeavours in contempt, under the notion, that the Greek question would shortly be settled by the decided triumph of the Turkish arms. Reshid Pacha, although he had at first experienced considerable checks, and had been reduced to a state of danger, had obtained great successes over the Greeks, in spite of the assistance of Lord Cochrane and General Church. Warniskali was killed, some hundreds of Greeks perished, and several pieces of cannon were taken. Nevertheless, a body of three thousand men remained in the Phalarus with General Church, and the Acropolis still held out, Colonel Fabvier retaining the command, and having provisions for two or three months.

Ibrahim Pacha was again in motion marching towards Patras, pursuing a system of massacre, destroying the males, and transporting the women and children into slavery in Egypt. The Reis Effendi denied the former of these allegations ; but did not deny, although he would not admit, the latter.

The Turks were encouraged by this success to persevere in the course which they had begun.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Canning had to come to a final decision respecting the Greek Protocol, to the conversion of which into a treaty he had previously consented. The measures, which he had before contemplated as calculated to give effect to its stipulations, were no longer likely to answer. The Emperor of Russia, urged on by his army, and his people, had declared it to be his fixed determination, to enforce the execution of the Protocol not only by coercion; but, if necessary, by hostility; whilst the object of Mr. Canning was to prevent Russia taking up arms against the Porte on behalf of her insurgent subjects. To have allowed, therefore, the Protocol to remain a dead letter, and to have refused the adoption of those means, by which alone there was any chance of its execution, would have been, at once, to leave to Russia to execute it at her own time, and in her own way, and would have been in fact to stop short, just when the prize was within reach, and to permit the very consummation, which so much time and labour had been employed in averting. If, therefore, it could be deemed a wise and legitimate object of British policy to prevent the invasion of Turkey by Russia on behalf of the Greeks, there can be no doubt that it was wise and politick to have recourse to stronger measures, than those

hitherto contemplated by Great Britain, to settle the disputes between the Turks and Greeks, by which alone, except indeed hostile opposition to Russia, that invasion could be arrested. It would seem, therefore, that the manifestation of a *bona fide* desire to act up to the spirit of the Protocol, and by so doing to compel the adherence of Russia to the self-denying clause, afforded the only means of preventing the annihilation of Turkey. The policy, then, of coercive measures may be considered as having been established. But it is not because it would have been advantageous to have recourse to coercion, that therefore the propriety of so doing is proved. Mr. Canning had also to consider, whether in good faith the circumstances of the case justified this Country in resorting to force. Up to this period the British Government had professed neutrality, and used their utmost exertions to maintain it; it was indeed true that some British subjects had violated that neutrality, but they did so in direct contravention to the wishes of their Government.

The laws of the land did not admit of an effectual control over them, but whatever means the Government possessed to restrain individual exertion had been put in operation. It was with this view that the proclamation at the latter end of 1825 was issued; not that Mr. Canning supposed that that proclamation would deter those individuals, who were bent on carrying

their assistance to the Greeks, from doing so, by any dread of the enactments of that law, which the proclamation brought to their recollection ; but in the hope that a stronger and more effective appeal might be made to publick feeling in England, against Lord Cochrane's enterprize, by pointing out the peculiar dangers likely to arise, not only to English interests, but to English families, from any English attack on Turkey, than could be made by reference to any general principle, or by the recital of any positive enactments of law.

The prohibition issued at the same time to prevent the export of arms, was a measure decidedly advantageous to the Turks ; and although, after a time, the Order in Council, by which that prohibition was enforced, was suffered to expire, still that could not be considered as a breach of neutrality, for neutrality is as completely observed by permitting, as by prohibiting export to both belligerents. Thus far, then, the Turks had no reason to complain of the conduct of the British Ministers, who had been willing to allow not only a reasonable, but a more than reasonable period of time to the antient Ally of their country, to settle by Herself Her internal commotions.

The British Government professed to be neutral ; and it must be admitted that it did its utmost to be so : but because neutrality had thus been

observed, at the outset of the contest, it did not follow that as the evils resulting from that contest increased in magnitude, not only without any prospect of cessation, but with the strongest probability, that still greater evils would follow in their train, that Great Britain would never have the right to interfere forcibly for their termination. By the treaty of Ackermann, Russia had exacted, and Turkey had consented to pay indemnification for injuries inflicted on Russian commerce by the piratical States of Barbary; we, on the other hand, had, from time immemorial, out of consideration for Turkey, sought indemnification for similar injuries from the Barbary States themselves. It is clear, therefore, that we had a right to indemnification from some quarter; and if the Porte insisted upon the Greeks continuing her subjects, and was herself unable to repress their depredations, Great Britain had a right either to demand indemnification at Constantinople, or else to insist on Turkey allowing such authority to be established in Greece, as would be capable either of preventing depredations, or of redressing them, if they were committed.

The bloody conflict which was carried on, and the state of anarchy in which the provinces of Greece, and the Islands of the Archipelago were involved, daily occasioned serious impediments to the commerce of the European States, and

produced piracies, which not only exposed the subjects of those states to considerable losses, but imposed on them the additional burden of having recourse to measures of surveillance, and of repression. No nation has a right to expect from other nations the indefinite toleration of its internal commotions, if those commotions are to be a perpetual source of grievance, and external annoyance.

But further, Ibrahim Pacha still continued, whenever the Greeks of the Morea made the slightest resistance, to massacre all the male adults, and to send the women and children into slavery in Egypt. It is true that these proceedings were never proved to have been the result of any arrangement sanctioned by the Porte. But their consequences were quite as fatal, as if they had been the result of a preconcerted design. Eleven years had hardly elapsed since, with the universal applause of the whole world, the British fleet nearly destroyed the city of Algiers, because the Dey refused to deliver, without ransom, the Christians whom he had made his slaves, and to bind himself by a solemn engagement to treat his prisoners according to the usages of European nations. Had we not in that case treated the Dey as independent, we must have sought redress from the Sultan. In the case of the Egyptian Pacha, who was clearly the Vassal of the Porte, and acting under Her

orders, the blockade of the Dardanelles, or the bombardment of Constantinople, would either of them have been a stroke of vengeance, which his atrocities would have justified.

Great Britain, then, had a right to declare war against Turkey, if no other mode existed of arresting the cruelties of Ibrahim ; and not only Great Britain *but Russia*. The result of a war between Turkey and Russia Mr. Canning had invariably anticipated would be the total defeat, if not annihilation, of the former. What, then, if some middle course were discovered, presenting the only chance whereby the disasters of such a contest might be avoided, at ~~now~~ the ~~now~~ that the stipulations of the Prot<sup>o</sup> therefore, that d ; a course whereby Russia m<sup>g</sup> from some quart<sup>er</sup> the Porte saved from destruction the Greek question set at rest for ever ? If such a course presented itself, its rejection would neither have been accordant with the interest of the Porte, nor consistent with one of the “ leading principles of England’s policy, the preservation of “ the peace of the world, and the maintenance “ of the then existing territorial distribution of “ Europe.” The rejection of such a course would, indeed, have been worse than folly, when the laws and practice of civilized nations justified its adoption.

Mr. Canning, therefore, consented that an additional and secret article should be affixed to the

patent treaty, proposed by the Baron de Damas, by which article it was agreed, that if at the end of a month the Porte did not accept the armistice proposed, or if the Greeks refused to agree to it, the high contracting Parties would declare to the one of the two Belligerents who was determined to continue hostilities, or to both of them, if necessary, that the said High Powers would endeavour, by all the means which "circumstances should suggest to their prudence, to obtain the immediate effects of the armistice," which they desired, by preventing, as far as they should be able, all collision between the two Belligerents; and, in effect, immediately after the above-mentioned declaration, the High Powers would employ conjointly all their efforts to accomplish the object, without taking part in the hostilities between the contending parties.

The patent treaty was almost exactly the same as the Protocol; and it was settled by it, that the arrangement should be guaranteed by those of the signing Powers, which should consider it either useful, or possible to contract this obligation.

The treaty was arranged in London; and, when communicated to the French Ministers, they expressed their regret that the guarantee had not been made obligatory upon all the contracting parties: they also objected to the allusion in the preamble to the Greek application. But

these objections being overcome, they announced that he was authorized to declare the accession of their Court to the treaty. When agreed upon, it was communicated to Austria; but she declined to accede to it, although for a long time the Austrian Ambassador in this Country had been furnished with full powers to sign it. The Prussian Government followed the example of Austria. The treaty was signed on the 6th of July, 1827, by Prince Lieven, Lord Dudley, and Prince Polignac.

In execution of this treaty instructions were sent in common to the Representatives of the three Powers at Constantinople, directing them to present a joint declaration to the Divan; stating that their respective Governments had for six years been exerting themselves to induce the Porte to restore tranquillity to Greece; that these efforts had been useless, and that a war of extermination had been prolonged, of which the results were on the one hand shocking to humanity, while on the other they inflicted intolerable injuries on the commerce of all nations. That on those accounts it was no longer possible to admit that the fate of Greece, concerned exclusively the Ottoman Porte, and that the Courts of London, of Paris, and St. Petersburg, therefore, felt it to be their duty to regulate by a special treaty the line of conduct which they had resolved to follow. That they offered their mediation between

the Sublime Porte and the Greeks to put an end to the War, and to settle by an amicable negotiation the relations, which ought for the future to exist between them.

That for the purpose of facilitating the success of the mediation, they proposed to the Sublime Porte to suspend by an armistice all acts of hostility towards the Greeks, to whom a similar and simultaneous proposition was to be addressed.

Lastly, that before the end of a month, the Ottoman Porte must make known its definitive determination.

That it was hoped that that determination would be in conformity with the wishes of the Allied Courts ; but if the Porte refused to comply with the request, or returned an evasive and insufficient answer, or even maintained a complete silence, the Allied Courts would be compelled to have recourse to the measures which they should think most likely to be efficacious, to put an end to a state of things, incompatible with the true interests of the Porte, with the security of the commerce, and the assured tranquillity of Europe.

In the event of no answer, an evasive answer, or a refusal on the part of the Porte, before a month had elapsed, the Divan was to be informed that the Allied Courts would interfere themselves to establish an armistice ; but that, in the execution of this resolution, they were far from wish-

ing to put an end to their friendly relations with the Porte.

The result of these Representations was forthwith to be reported to the Admirals, commanding the several fleets of the Allies, who were instructed to make a similar requisition for an armistice, to the Greek Government; and in the event of either that Government, or the Porte refusing, or delaying, to consent to the establishment of an armistice, coercive measures were to be taken to enforce it.

If the Porte should be the refusing party (for after the propositions made by the Greeks there was little chance of their not consenting to the armistice), the Allied Squadrons were to unite, and the Admirals were to enter into friendly relations with the Greeks on the one hand, and on the other, to intercept all ships, freighted with men and arms, destined to act against the Greeks, whether coming from Turkey, or from the coast of Africa.

But whatever measures they might adopt towards the Ottoman Navy, the three Admirals were especially instructed to take extreme care (*soin extrême*) that they should not degenerate into hostilities. The fixed intention of the three Powers was to interpose as conciliators (*conciliatrices*), and any hostile step would be contrary to the pacifick character, which they were desirous of assuming.

The settlement of this treaty, and of these instructions to the Representatives of the three Courts, at Constantinople, and to the commanders of the Allied squadron, were Mr. Canning's last acts on the subject of Greek affairs.

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We have now brought to a close the history of those measures of foreign and domestick policy, which either originated with Mr. Canning himself, or were supported by him, when brought forward by his colleagues.

What remains untold relates to the changes in the Administration; the circumstances attendant upon which, however much they may tend to elevate his personal character, as a high-minded and straight-forward individual, neither increase nor diminish the merits of his "system" of foreign policy. Previously, therefore, to entering upon the details of those transactions, and while the course of that policy is yet fresh in the mind of the reader, it may be well to endeavour to illustrate his "system" by a few remarks, in order to show how exactly it produced, when completely developed, the effects which he anticipated from its enforcement. Those effects were, first, to disperse the danger with which the world was threatened from the collision of the supporters of absolute power, and

the advocates of revolution ; secondly, to restore to Great Britain her just influence amongst the other Powers of Europe ; thirdly, to advance the prosperity of surrounding nations by a judicious use of that influence ; and, fourthly, above all, to promote by these means the interests of his own Country.

With respect to the first, Mr. Canning well knew that the preponderance of physical force, if aided by the middle orders, was on the popular side ; and he was equally well convinced that any attempts too rigorously to compress that force, so aided, would infallibly end in an explosion, fatal indeed to one party, but at the same time severely injurious to the other. The Holy Alliance, when he became Foreign Secretary, had been for some years gradually diminishing the liberties of their subjects, and were advancing in their career with an accelerated velocity, which promised speedily to bring things to that pass, at which the least symptom of a design to impose fresh restraints would produce a convulsive re-action. Mr. Canning determined, therefore, to stop without delay this fatal progress — by gradually weakening the Body which imposed the compressing force, and then altogether extinguishing the Body itself. He accordingly at once withdrew Great Britain from the councils of the Alliance, and publickly denounced their doctrines, by which means he succeeded in check-

ing their speed, and in decreasing their strength. This done, he acted in direct opposition to their principles, and in defiance of their wishes ; after which the Alliance existed but in name. Thus, without rashly upholding, he benefited the popular cause, teaching both parties that real friendship would recommend mutual concessions for mutual advantage.

Until the recognition of the Independence of Spanish America, a measure essential for restoring between the two parties the equilibrium, which the overthrow of the Spanish Constitution had disturbed, the Holy Alliance fondly hoped that British Counsels might once more be brought within their influence. That stroke of policy at once broke the delusion, and proclaimed both to them and to the world, the triumph of Mr. Canning and his principles.

The Holy Alliance, thus placed in open and avowed opposition to the British Government, was paralyzed in all its operations, and ventured on no new crusades : the conferences at St. Petersburgh on Greek affairs (the last occasion on which the members sat in conclave) were held in vain, and shortly after Russia, who had been the soul of the union, declared without reserve that she would not again consult with such Allies.

Mr. Canning, by thus withering into nothingness this mighty combination of Continental

Sovereigns, soothed the exasperated feelings of the people, and taught them to look with confidence towards the British Government, and with increased moderation on the just pretensions of their own. He relieved Europe from the incubus with which she had been oppressed; and feelings of sympathy between kings and people again began to revive. Neither party, indeed, had triumphed, but both, in reality, had gained. The irritating oppression of the Alliance being removed, the excitement to resistance was withdrawn, so that while the cause of liberty was advanced, the foundations of monarchy were strengthened.

Mr. Canning having thus annihilated the Alliance, was rewarded with the publick respect of Europe, by means of which he was enabled to exercise influence over the Continental Cabinets. To the little influence, which this Country possessed over the Alliance as a body, the proceedings at the Congresses of Laybach and Verona afford undeniable testimony. “ We “ protested at the one — we remonstrated at “ the other — our protestations were treated as “ waste paper, our remonstrances mingled with the air.” But, the Holy Alliance dissolved, not only no necessity arose for protests, but the Members of the union individually courted the friendship of Great Britain, and sought Her aid for extrication from their own particular

difficulties. Russia, and France, avowed that they looked to the British Government for the solution of the complications arising out of the Greek quarrel; Austria co-operated with Great Britain to settle the differences between Portugal and Brazil; France consulted her as to the withdrawal of the French troops from Spain; Greece solicited her protection; Spanish America regarded her with gratitude; and Europe resounded from one end to the other with praises of her foreign policy, and admiration of the individual who directed it.

Thus not only were no measures pursued against her will, but in all the great questions of the day, she took the lead; the Continental Governments feeling, that they could rely with as much safety on Mr. Canning's integrity, as on his skill; and that what he undertook to perform he would certainly accomplish, without any attempt to over-reach those, with whom he had consented to co-operate.

The position of Great Britain was thus of the most commanding nature, but yet it did not excite any jealousy in other Nations; a phenomenon, which can only be explained by remembering, that the power, which she possessed, was exerted, not exclusively for her own benefit, but also for that of surrounding nations. "To "preserve the peace of the world was the "leading policy of England." Accordingly it

will have been seen, how zealously Mr. Canning laboured "to prevent the breaking out " of new quarrels ; to compose by friendly me- " diation existing differences ; and if that were " hopeless, to narrow as much as possible their " limits." Peace between nations he well knew was one of the main ingredients of national pros- perity ; and internal peace, a yet greater blessing, stood the best chance of being preserved, in the then existing circumstances of the world, if both kings and people were cut off from all hope of external aid. It was evident that the tide of popular feelings set so strong in favour of an enlargement of popular privileges, that none of the absolute Monarchies on the Continent would long be able to withstand it ; but, that the people might secure their liberties on a solid foundation, it was essential that those liberties should be acquired by degrees, and not by any convulsive efforts. " To attempt," he said, " to shorten " the road between desire and attainment is, " nine times out of ten, to go astray, and to miss " altogether the wished for object." Periods, indeed, of popular commotion are not the fittest moments for settling with deliberate wisdom the limits of monarchical authority, or adjusting the balance of power between the different orders of a state : - and experience teaches that those liberal institutions are the best, which have been adapted in seasons of domestick tranquillity to

the wants of the community, and have not been framed, in times of publick excitement, on baseless theories, or delusive principles of imagined right. By discouraging popular violence, therefore, Mr. Canning had no fear that freedom would be stifled ; while, on the other hand, by diverting Monarchs from the vain attempt to extinguish it, he well knew that he was saving their grade, from the only real danger which could assail it. The interests of kings and subjects, rightly understood, are not at variance with each other.

By steadily acting in conformity with these views, Mr. Canning succeeded, in confining within the narrowest limits the struggle of principle between France and Spain, and in removing the provocations to any similar conflict.

Europe was restored to a state of comparative repose, with a reasonable prospect that it would remain undisturbed. No nation profited more by that repose than this country : peace was and is essential to its interests, but peace can never be secure while war rages among its neighbours and allies.

Mr. Canning, then, truly consulted the interests of England by promoting those of neighbouring States, and by labouring to preserve the general tranquillity of the world.

For the first four years after Mr. Canning accepted the seals of office, he had contented himself with allowing his system silently to do its

work without any publick explanation of it. In his dealings with Foreign Governments it was easy enough, by a single word, to make their diplomatick agents understand the true bias of his mind ; but in discussions on points of Foreign policy which took place in Parliament, although each speech will be found to be in strict accordance with his “system,” yet no necessity had arisen for any specifick exposition of it. A general impression prevailed that our Foreign Policy was ably conducted, because it was felt that British interests prospered, and that embarrassments diminished ; although some erroneously imagined, that because all went on smoothly, it was owing to the absence of difficulties, and not to the master spirit, which guided us through them in noiseless safety.

The occasion, however, at last arose, when it became necessary to make one party in the world comprehend the game which Mr. Canning was playing. The Apostolical factions in France and Spain, encouraged by Austria, were goading their respective Governments into measures for the overthrow of the Portuguese Constitution. Mr. Canning then deemed it expedient to open their eyes to the folly of their proceedings ; and accordingly, in the British Senate, he depicted in terms of glowing eloquence the horrors of the conflict, which they were seeking to create. By the ordinary means of diplomacy he had de-

stroyed the Holy Alliance ; by this speech he produced a most salutary impression upon those violent and misguided factions. The dread of forcing Great Britain into the ranks of their opponents had so powerful an effect upon the supporters of absolute Monarchy, that they never again ventured, during Mr. Canning's life, nor so long as the British Cabinet maintained his "system," to urge their Governments to the perpetration of deeds, calculated to provoke a conflict.

Since, then, to prevent a collision between the two parties was the chief aim of Mr. Canning, it may be asserted, without qualification, that he completely succeeded. He had, however, long entertained a strong conviction that a departure from his course of policy would renew the danger. In the House of Commons in 1825, he stated it to be his deliberate opinion that his relinquishment of office at that moment would not only retard the success of the Catholic cause, but would, at the same time " bring " upon the Country *other evils* of a most tre- " mendous character :" and a similar train of thought, evidently, led him to give utterance to that reflection in which, with prophetick accuracy, perhaps unparalleled in the annals of history, he foretold the exact time which in the event of that departure would elapse before the realization of his fears. " Two years," he said, when con-

templating the probability of his own dissolution, and of his having the Duke of Wellington as a successor, whose principles he knew to be at variance with his own, “ Two years, will undo “ all that I have done.”

## CHAP. XVII.

DEATH OF THE DUKE OF YORK.—ILLNESS OF LORD LIVERPOOL.—ADVICE TO THE KING ON THAT EVENT.—CORN LAWS AND CATHOLICK QUESTION.—STATE OF PARTIES AFTER THE DEBATES ON THESE QUESTIONS.—MR. CANNING'S INTERVIEW WITH THE KING.—MESSAGE TO THE CABINET.—MR. CANNING EMPOWERED BY THE KING TO RECONSTRUCT THE ADMINISTRATION.

THE reader must now be carried back to some important domestick events which marked the commencement of 1827.

On the 5th of January the Duke of York expired after a long and painful illness. His Royal Highness was the political enemy of Mr. Canning; and not long before his dissolution he had made an urgent representation to the King, “strenuously advising His Majesty to place the Government of the Country in a state of uniformity — and that that uniformity should be one of a decided opposition to the Catholick Claims.” His Majesty was, however, too well

convinced of the value of Mr. Canning's services to be willing to dispense with them, as he must have done had he followed the advice of his Brother ; and the step which His Royal Highness had taken was communicated to Mr. Canning.

The health of His Royal Highness was, at the time of this communication, supposed to be rapidly improving ; but Mr. Canning determined to wait for the more advanced recovery of the *Commander in Chief*, before he adopted any decisive measures, with respect to this active demonstration of hostility against a confidential servant of the Crown on the part of an individual holding so high an official post in the King's service. Instead, however, of recovering, His Royal Highness shortly after began rapidly to grow worse. While in this state the Royal patient was exhorted to leave behind him some testamentary exposition of his opinions on the Catholick Question ; he, however, steadfastly refused to do so, saying, that had he lived he would have fought the question to the uttermost, but that he did not think it fair to embarrass those from whom he was about to be separated. Such noble and considerate conduct served not a little to increase Mr. Canning's " self-congratulation that he had " not allowed himself to be hurried into a contro- " versial discussion, which must in its effects have " disquieted the last weeks of His Royal High-

“ ness’s life, and the closing intercourse between  
“ His Royal Highness and the King.

“ I would not,” said Mr. Canning, “ for the  
“ world have had to lay such a consequence to  
“ my own charge, however unintentionally pro-  
“ duced, or under whatever provocation.”

Mr. Canning attended the funeral of the Duke of York, at which mournful ceremony he caught a cold, which ended in an illness, that gave a shock to his constitution, from which it never entirely recovered.

It was at Brighton, on the evening of the 17th of February, before he had been able to quit his room to which he had been confined by this illness, and almost before he had attended to any business, that Mr. Canning first heard, that Lord Liverpool had been attacked by apoplexy in the morning of that day, and that he continued in a state of total insensibility.

The painful intelligence was communicated by a letter from Mr. Peel, who arrived at the Pavilion late in the evening, and had a short audience of His Majesty. Early on the following morning Mr. Peel had a conference with Mr. Canning, when it was agreed that the joint advice most fitting to tender to the King would be to delay the adoption of any measures: since immediately “ to presume a fatal, or a hopeless issue to Lord Liverpool’s illness would be highly indelicate; and if Lord Liverpool

"should ever come to himself sufficiently to learn what had passed, it would be gratifying to all parties that no step had been taken, on even mooted, for the disposal of his succession."

In this advice the King directly concurred, and at once entered into the feelings which dictated it.

By the 22d of February Mr. Canning was sufficiently recovered to attend the King. At that interview His Majesty expressed his great satisfaction at the advice which had been given.

At the time of Lord Liverpool's attack the two questions of the corn laws, and Catholick emancipation, were about to be brought before Parliament.

In that Minister the former measure lost its most efficient advocate, and the latter had no longer to contend with one of its most able, though certainly not bigoted, or headstrong opponents.

The 26th of February had been fixed for the simultaneous bringing forward, in both Houses, severally by Mr. Canning and Lord Liverpool, of the proposed alterations in the Corn Laws. And on the 1st of March Sir Francis Burdett was to have made his motion on Catholick Emancipation. Before Mr. Canning left Brighton communications were made to him, signifying

that Sir Francis would delay the Catholick Question from the 1st to the 5th of March, if it were wished, in order to give Mr. Canning a longer time for the recovery of his health. Mr. Canning, however, though ill able to encounter the fatigue of a debate, was most anxious to prevent any postponement: since the introduction of the proposed corn bill, while Lord Liverpool remained, at least the *nominal* head of the Government, he considered as being of the utmost importance to its success.

How long Lord Liverpool might so continue it was impossible to calculate, since it was equally probable, that, in the course of the succeeding week, he might, either have sunk under the disease which afflicted him, or that he might have recovered sufficient consciousness to enable him to tender his resignation. Mr. Canning likewise attached equal importance to the discussion of the Catholick Question before a new Government was formed; for the decision of the House of Commons on this question, would have been of great importance in determining the principles which should be made the basis of its formation: besides, if the House of Commons, as Mr. Canning confidently anticipated, had given a favourable vote, it would have considerably forwarded the object, which he was most anxious to accomplish, —the final settlement of this agitating question. At this time

great doubts arose among its Whig supporters, as to the expediency of bringing forward any motion while the Government remained in its then state; and, consequently, to afford time for some arrangement, it was postponed by Sir Francis Burdett from the 1st to the 5th of March.

Mr. Canning's opinion with respect to its postponement was, that "if it were put off till "a new Government was settled it would be put "off, *sine die*. His great hope of a favourable "result was in the declaration of the opinion of "the new House of Commons. From intimations which had reached him he had grounds "for hoping that there would have been an improvement in the House of Lords, if the new "House of Commons should have declared itself "favourable. But if there were any hesitation "shown in bringing the Commons to the test, "all the considerations which were then influencing the Peers, and preparing them for "a change, would turn the other way, and lead "them to a sturdy resistance.

"Few circumstances he thought could be "more advantageous than those under which the "Commons would have to come to their vote. "He thought them, more so, indeed, than they "would be with a Government, which should "have declared itself in favour of the "question.

“ It was a measure which,” he said, “ must win, not force its way ; and he was morally certain that an attempt to force the question upon the Country by a Government, united on this point, and for this purpose, would be the prelude to another catastrophe like that of the India Bill in 1784.”

Sir Francis Burdett, however, delayed his motion from the 1st to the 5th of March, and the accounts of Lord Liverpool being such as to render it almost certain that he would remain for some time in his then state, Mr. Canning took advantage of the delay, and postponed the corn question till the 1st of March. On the 27th of February he arrived in London, and two days after he made his appearance in the House of Commons, and moved certain resolutions on which the new corn bill was to be founded : the provisions of which have been already described.

The effect of his speech was very remarkable : before he went down to the House on Thursday, two gentlemen, peculiarly well acquainted with the House of Commons, had drawn a most gloomy picture “ of the state of it. The great landholders,” they said, “ had all got together ; they were determined upon prohibition, no compromise would appease them. “ The Lords were more violent than the Commons, and they were all pledged to each

“ other.” But in spite of this formidable array, when Mr. Canning had finished his speech, those who were thus said to be inflexibly bent on resistance were to be seen “ moving about the “ House in knots of three and four, and no three “ of them agreeing on what point, or in what “ direction to muster an opposition.”

The bill passed the House of Commons before it adjourned for the Easter recess, but not the other branch of the legislature.

A similar success to that which attended Mr. Canning’s exertions on the corn bill unfortunately did not attend them on the Catholick question. Previously to the debate, no expedient had been left untried, as well by some influential Protestant members of the Government, as by some of its Protestant supporters, to procure a decision, unfavourable to the measure.

The language held on that occasion was of two kinds; and though, perhaps, the same individual always expressed the same opinions, the opinions expressed by individuals of the same party certainly very widely differed from each other. To the most bigoted anti-Catholicks, who disliked Mr. Canning both for his support of emancipation, and for his being the advocate of liberal principles, it was represented that an adverse vote would have the effect of ousting both that Minister, and those of his colleagues who

thought with him, from the Government: to those who, being anti-Catholick, yet still were friendly to Mr. Canning's general principles of policy, and wished him to continue in the administration, it was represented that an adverse vote would be the best means of keeping the existing Government together.

This manœuvring unfortunately produced on the minds of the members of the House of Commons more powerful effects, than the lesson taught them by the events which had occurred in Ireland during the preceding general election. Those events, it might have been thought, would have spoken to the understanding, in a way which it was difficult to misinterpret. The Catholick Association, the Catholick clergy, and the Catholick people, had combined with many Protestants to reject every candidate who was opposed to emancipation; and in each instance, where a contest took place, this combination triumphed, over the influence of the landlords, which till then had been invariably predominant. It thus became evident, and was indeed admitted by all, that the whole Catholick population of Ireland — a population of awful magnitude, of fiery tempers, and unbridled passions — were united in one organized mass, under able leaders, for the purpose of demanding from the Legislature of the United Kingdom, those privileges from which they considered themselves unjustly excluded. Nevertheless, upon the opponents of

emancipation, not even upon the more gifted amongst them, did this most formidable array make the slightest impression ; for they still continued unable to perceive that these signs afforded too certain indications of civil contest at no very distant period, if they were met with opposition, instead of conciliation. Even in Mr. Peel's opinion \*, " the consequence of the admission of Catholicks into Parliament would be to bring the Catholick and Protestant religions into collision, in such a way as might lead to the destruction of the latter ; " but although he believed that the admission of Catholicks to Parliament and to offices of State would endanger the Constitution, yet he did not hesitate to say, that if he were satisfied that such a measure would have the effect which was anticipated from it by some persons, that it would restore peace and tranquillity to Ireland, he would sacrifice his apprehensions of the ultimate result, to the attainment of that immense present benefit. He could not, however, make up his mind to believe that the removal of the disabilities which pressed upon the Catholicks of Ireland, would produce any such consummation." And again, in a subsequent part of his speech, he said that " he would do every thing that lay in his power to put a stop to the dissensions which distracted

\* Vide Mr. Peel's Speech, March 1. 1827.

“ Ireland, but in his conscience he believed that  
 “ the course which was called emancipation  
 “ would be attended by the very contrary of  
 “ such result.” And again, “ he had concurred  
 “ with him ” (Lord Wellesley) “ in securing to  
 “ the Catholicks every indulgence to which by  
 “ law they were entitled, \* \* \* but further than  
 “ that, consistently with his conscience, and  
 “ with a conviction formed upon long and care-  
 “ ful deliberation, he was not prepared to go.”

The Master of the Rolls (Sir John Copley) likewise spoke on the same side with Mr. Peel. The learned gentleman’s grounds of opposition were, however, totally distinct from those of the Home Secretary. The Master of the Rolls apprehended danger to the Constitution from concession, if securities were not devised; but he was far from saying that it was impossible to devise them, and still less did he appear to agree with Mr. Peel in thinking, after long and careful deliberation, that emancipation would increase the distractions of Ireland.

The groundwork of the learned gentleman’s speech was unfortunately founded on a letter, addressed by Dr. Philpotts to Mr. Canning, which the Reverend controversialist had published in the form of a pamphlet. This individual had previously failed in drawing Mr. Canning into a private polemical correspondence, on the subject of the Athanasian

Creed; he was not more successful with his published letter, which savoured little of Christian charity, for Mr. Canning never took the trouble to notice it; but when used by the Master of the Rolls, it gave to his speech a character of personal hostility to Mr. Canning, which, there is every reason to believe, was very far from the intention of the speaker.

It was late in the debate when Mr. Canning rose, much exhausted, and far from well.

He applied himself more particularly to answer the arguments of the Master of the Rolls, in the course of doing which, he made some sarcastick observations. The unfairness of the learned gentleman's arguments he considered to consist in introducing into a discussion on the general principle, the question of securities, which was one of detail, and only a collateral branch of the subject; and in doing so, as if the supporters of general concession had given up the whole project of securities, when in point of fact the business of the night did not include that part of the subject.

The effect of this debate was to produce a coolness between Mr. Canning and the Master of the Rolls, a circumstance which was viewed with no small degree of pleasure by the several enemies of each of them. The language of the Master of the Rolls was, however, unequivocally, that in the speech that he had made he had no

manner of intention of acting with hostility towards Mr. Canning ; and the feelings which he avowed were rather those of a friend who was hurt, than of an individual who had any thing to resent.

The lateness of the hour and his own state of exhaustion prevented Mr. Canning from entering at large into the general merits of the question ; but his answer to Mr. Peel on the condition of Ireland must not be here omitted, as it shows with what sagacious foresight he estimated the consequences of that condition, how erroneous he thought Mr. Peel's view of the probable effects of emancipation, and how great the danger of applying the remedy which the Home Secretary then recommended with such perfect confidence, as the only panacea.

“ The picture,” said he, “ which has been drawn of the state of Ireland, by Gentlemen whether espousing the one or the other side of the question, is of a nature so appalling, that I think it becomes the duty of the English part of the House of Commons, judging from the statements that have been made by the members of the Sister Island, to consider well before they throw away any chance of improving her condition. My Right Honourable friend (Mr. Peel) has stated that these troubles and these difficulties should be met by firmness and decision ; firmness and decision, Sir,

“are admirable qualities ; but they are virtues  
 “or vices according as they are used. I will not  
 “take them in the unfavourable sense in which  
 “they have been taken generally, by the ears  
 “which have heard them this night ; for if I did,  
 “I should not envy the hand on which would  
 “devolve the task of carrying such a system  
 “into effect.”

After Mr. Canning’s speech the House divided, and the motion was lost by four. Mr. Canning, who was with “the Yeas” in the lobby, described himself as being in a “fool’s paradise,” as those with him were so numerous that he had no doubt that they were the majority. The effect of the division was to prevent any specifick motion on the subject being brought forward during the remainder of the year.

Mr. Canning continued to attend the House of Commons for the next three days, — but was again prevented from doing so by an illness, which confined him to his apartment till the 18th of March.

Meanwhile the ordinary business proceeded in the House of Commons, Lord Liverpool’s health continued almost imperceptibly to improve, and no steps were taken to re-organize the Government.

On the 22d Mr. Canning received an invitation to the Royal Lodge, and on the 28th of March he proceeded thither ; on which occasion

the first practical discussions respecting the new arrangements took place.

The postponement of these arrangements, which had been dictated as well by feelings of delicacy towards Lord Liverpool as by considerations of publick advantage, was not unaccompanied by its counterbalancing inconveniences. The critical situation of the Government kept men's minds in that state of excitement, that they could not rest without either talking, or doing *something*, whether it were for good, or for eyil: and since the policy of the principal personages in the drama was to be quiet, individuals, who held a secondary station in political importance, began to think that it was, at least, incumbent upon them not to remain inactive. The consequence was that those, who, if it had pleased God to have terminated, at the same moment, Lord Liverpool's mortal, as well as political career, would have been content, had the immediate filling up of his vacancy been thus necessitated, to have seen that vacancy supplied by Mr. Canning, had time to consult together, and by exciting each other's imaginations to be deluded into a belief, that, though for the four preceding years, Mr. Canning's had been the labouring oar in the Government, yet because he was the avowed supporter of liberal principles, and because he was an advocate for Catholick emancipation, he was on these accounts

unfit to hold the first place in the councils of his Sovereign. Had this opinion produced on its professors no other effect than a determination not to support a Government of which Mr. Canning was the head, it would be impossible to find in their conduct any just grounds of censure. But they did not confine themselves to such moderate, and constitutional measures; for certainly one noble Duke (and reports at that time stated that there were two) asked for an audience of the King, at which he attempted to dictate to his Sovereign, in the exercise of his undoubted prerogative (that of choosing the individual, in whom he would repose his chief confidence), by threatening His Majesty with the withdrawal of his own support, and the support of some other noble personages who thought with him, in the event of His Majesty thinking it right to place Mr. Canning at the head of His Government. The way in which His Majesty received this intimation may be judged from the result. But this was not the only inconvenience which resulted from the then existing inter-regnum; for certainly the "talk " which part of the connexions of those who "belonged to a Government to which as yet " Mr. Canning belonged thought themselves at "liberty to hold respecting him," was of a most indecorous character.

It was on the 27th of March that Mr. Canning went to the Royal Lodge ; and on the following day the King held a long conversation with him on the then state of the Government. In that conversation, when Mr. Canning was called upon for his advice, aware of the King's individual opinions on the Catholick question, he counselled His Majesiy to frame His Government conformably to those opinions : but the King, although expressing his sense of "the "impossibility of parting" with Mr. Canning, nevertheless proposed to place at the Head of the Administration, a Peer holding Lord Liverpool's opinions on that question : whereupon Mr. Canning, upon being commanded to speak without reserve, humbly submitted to his Majesty, that if those whose sentiments were favourable to the Catholicks were to be excluded solely on account of those sentiments, as much as the Catholics from the highest elevations in the state, and from the greatest objects of ambition, he could "not consent to be the individual in whose person such a principle should "be established." He therefore felt himself bound honestly to state to His Majesty, "in "plain terms," that "the substantive power of "First Minister he must have, and, what was "more, must be known to have," or he must beg leave to be allowed to retire from a situation which he could "no longer fill either with sa-

“ satisfaction to himself, or with benefit to the  
“ King’s service.”

The determination expressed by Mr. Canning in this conference speaks for itself, and requires little comment. He knew that he had been the main stay of the Government during the four years that he had been a member of it; that as leader of the House of Commons, he held in the Ministry the second station; and that, whenever a vacancy in the first should occur, he could not without degradation have consented to have his own just claims set aside in favour of another, unless there were better reasons for proscribing him than his being favourable to the Catholick cause; and he well knew that a publick man, once degraded, could never again serve His King or his Country with advantage to them, or with honour to himself. His resolution therefore was early taken, unhesitatingly announced, and steadfastly maintained.

It should, however, be borne in mind what that resolution was. It was not that he would

\* This brief statement of what passed in this conference between the King and Mr. Canning, is founded on a paper which the latter left behind him, recording the whole of the conversation. It was dictated by Mr. Canning immediately after his return from the Royal Lodge, and of course it would not be justifiable to quote it, except in elucidation of that which Mr. Canning had recorded his intention of publishing, viz. the correspondence with the Duke of Wellington, which will be found in the next chapter, and in which reference is made to this conversation.

resign unless he were *First Lord of the Treasury*, but that he would resign unless he held, and was known to hold, the post of *First Minister*; a post which it was at first supposed by the King might be held by any one of His confidential servants, and formerly had been held by Lord Chatham, with the office of Privy Seal.

While these things were passing on the subject of the Government, the House of Commons had begun to manifest symptoms of impatience at the continuance of the Government in an unsettled state. On the 30th of March, on the bringing up of the resolution for the vote of supply, which Mr. Robinson had procured a few evenings before, Mr. Tierney proposed to defer any further proceeding thereupon, until the 1st of May, in order that the grant might be made "to a known and responsible Administration."

Mr. Canning, in reply to Mr. Tierney, explained the reasons of the delay in reconstructing the Government, and showed —

" That the publick business in Parliament had " not suffered by the delay: for, that the Corn " Bill, the only business of importance which " had been brought forward, had not only been " sanctioned by Lord Liverpool, but in effect " prepared by him, and that no new matter had " been stirred :

" That, however, the operation of the prin-

“ ciples on which His Majesty had acted, on  
 “ this occasion, must have its limits ; that it had  
 “ been within a few days ascertained to His  
 “ Majesty’s entire conviction that there was no  
 “ reasonable hope of Lord Liverpool’s essential  
 “ recovery within a reasonable time ; and, that  
 “ His Majesty was then occupied in endea-  
 “ vouring to supply, as far as possible, the  
 “ chasm in His Majesty’s Government occa-  
 “ sioned by Lord Liverpool’s irreparable loss.”

The announcement that the arrangements for the formation of a new Ministry were in progress, apparently gave so much satisfaction to the House, that Mr. Tierney consented not to press his motion to a division, assuming, however, as a condition of it, that the new Administration was to be “ declared ” before the adjournment of the House for the holydays. This condition Mr. Canning did not admit ; and Mr. Tierney (at the instigation of some persons around him) revoked his determination not to divide, although many members had left the House in consequence of it.

The motion was rejected by a majority of 73 ; but what passed clearly manifested the necessity of as little time as possible being lost, in making the requisite arrangements.

No further attempt was made either to embarrass, or hasten their completion, with the exception of the notice of a motion by

Sir Thomas Lethbridge “ to represent to His  
 “ Majesty, the evils of a Government not  
 “ united in itself, upon all questions of vital  
 “ importance.”

The real object which Sir Thomas proposed to effect by this motion was, to force the formation of an exclusively anti-Catholick Government.

This notice was supposed to have been given without concert with any party, and was abandoned on the day on which it was to have been brought forward.

Meanwhile, although between the 31st of March and the 6th of April, Mr. Canning had no communication whatsoever with His Majesty on the subject of the arrangements, yet he had frequent conferences with the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel.

Mr. Peel's conduct in all of these interviews was in every respect honourable and consistent; he had made up his mind to resign, if an individual favourable to the Catholicks should be placed at the head of the Government; and as soon as he found that Mr. Canning would not yield this point, he made known what were his intentions. His professions, too, “ of respect and regard” for Mr. Canning were unbounded; so much so that Mr. Canning expressed himself as feeling “ it quite impossible to do sufficient justice to his frankness, and straightforwardness, and to feelings for which he

"owned he had not before given" Mr. Peel  
 "credit, but which," he said, "he hoped he  
 "knew how to value and return."

With the conduct of the Duke of Wellington Mr. Canning at one time thought he had reason to be dissatisfied, and certainly a good deal of misapprehension existed between them. Mr. Canning had heard that His Grace did not disapprove, even if he did not sanction, the conduct of the Duke of Newcastle; and since the language of some of the immediate adherents of the Duke of Wellington was certainly any thing but friendly to Mr. Canning, it was not unnatural to suppose that their sentiments were, in some degree at least, in unison with those of their chief. Mr. Canning's feelings, therefore, towards the Duke, about this period, were not of the most cordial nature; but, on the 2d of April, a common friend called on Mr. Canning: and, with the view to promote a better understanding, proposed that His Grace should have an interview with Mr. Canning on the following day. The Duke accordingly came to the Foreign Office on the 3d of April, and a conversation of two hours took place between them.

At this conference on the part of Mr. Canning "the fullest details were given of what passed "at his audience with His Majesty at Windsor." On the part of the Duke, explanations were offered, which induced Mr. Canning to say

“ that every thing that had been in doubt had been cleared up satisfactorily ;” and that they “ parted,” as a mutual friend would have wished, — “ all being left well.”

No definite “ practical result,” however, was produced by the meeting, beyond the restoration of personal amity, and reciprocal good will.

On the following day (April 4.) Mr. Canning again saw the Duke of Wellington for a few minutes, who expressed his wish that Mr. Canning and Mr. Peel should “ meet again the following day, before the King’s coming to town.” Mr. Canning accordingly wrote to Mr. Peel to propose an interview, stating the Duke of Wellington’s wish as his reason for so doing.

They met accordingly on the 5th, and had a long conversation together, “ than which nothing could be more satisfactory as to manner and feeling. But the practical point as to Mr. Peel’s own decision remained just where it was.”

Mr. Canning likewise again saw the Duke of Wellington for a few minutes.

The effect of these two conferences was, that the belief which Mr. Canning had once entertained that the Duke of Wellington never thought “ of himself for the post of Prime Minister was entirely changed, and that” Mr. Canning’s

“ belief then was that the Duke, and perhaps  
“ Mr. Peel too, hoped that the explanation be-  
“ tween Mr. Canning and the Duke would have  
“ ended in” Mr. Canning’s expressing a wish  
that the Duke “ should take the Government.”

The desire to be First Minister, which Mr. Canning thought that the Duke entertained, His Grace subsequently disclaimed in the strongest and most unequivocal terms, asserting that he not only did not wish to occupy that post, but had an absolute repugnance to holding it — a repugnance, however, which, about sixteen months after, he succeeded in conquering.

On the night of the 5th the King came to town, and Mr. Canning had an interview with His Majesty on the 6th.

On the 9th, by the King’s command, Mr. Canning saw Mr. Peel, who came for the purpose of stating to Mr. Canning the name of an “ individual whose appointment, as Premier, “ Mr. Peel conceived likely to solve all difficulties.” That individual was the Duke of Wellington. But Mr. Canning was of opinion that the appointment of His Grace would not afford any such solution. This last attempt at excluding Mr. Canning from the Premiership on account of his Catholick sentiments, while he remained in the Government, having failed, the King determined to protract no longer the anxious state of suspense in which the Country

had been kept, and accordingly sent for Mr. Canning on the 10th of April, and issued to him His Royal Commands to prepare "with as little "delay as 'possible a plan for the reconstruction "of the Administration."

## CHAP. XVIII.

## NEGOTIATIONS RESPECTING THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

— RESIGNATIONS OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, THE LORD CHANCELLOR, LORD BATHURST, LORD MELVILLE, LORD BEXLEY, AND MR. PEEL. — DUKE OF CLARENCE NOMINATED LORD HIGH ADMIRAL. — NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE WHIGS. — ARRANGEMENT OF THE NEW CABINET. — IRISH GOVERNMENT.

MR. CANNING left the King late in the afternoon of Tuesday the 10th of April, and “as the “day fixed for the adjournment of Parliament “was Thursday the 12th, there was not an “instant to be lost in proceeding to the execu-“tion of His Majesty’s commands.

“Lord Granville, Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. “Planta, happening to be at the Foreign Office “when Mr. Canning returned from St. James’s, “Lord Granville” (Lord Harrowby’s brother-“in-law) “was requested to convey to Lord Har-“rowby, Mr. Huskisson to Lord Melville and

“ to Mr. Wynn, and Mr. Planta to ” his friend, “ Mr. Robinson, verbally, the announcement ” of Mr. Canning having received “ the King’s “ commands to lay before His Majesty a plan “ of arrangement for the reconstruction of the “ Administration,” and of Mr. Canning’s wish to “ adhere” in so doing, “ to the principles on “ which Lord Liverpool’s Government had so “ long acted together.”

A similar communication Mr. Canning made in writing “ to the Duke of Wellington, Lord “ Bathurst, Lord Westmoreland, and Lord “ Bexley.

“ Mr. Canning wrote also to the Lord Chan- “ cellor to ask leave to call upon His Lordship “ in the evening, and also to Mr. Peel to ask “ him to call at the Foreign Office ; but subse- “ quently ” (Mr. Peel being at the House of Commons when the first letter was sent to him) “ Mr. Canning offered to call upon him “ on returning from the Lord Chancellor’s, and “ this Mr. Canning did.”

In the formation of the new administration Mr. Canning was sincerely anxious to keep together the elements of Lord Liverpool’s Government.

In the first place, it was the King’s wish that he should do so, and in the next, the assistance of nearly all of the members of that Government he would have been well pleased to secure.

The state of the Catholick Question, moreover, was another very strong reason for his wishing so to do.

Mr. Canning's opinions, as to the then position of that Question, were, that there was a decided majority of the people of England opposed to concession,—that the best chance of overcoming with safety that opposition was by frequent discussions, which would help to do away with much of the prejudice, and ignorance which prevailed on the subject,—and that the very fact of a friend to emancipation being at the head of the Government would materially advance the cause, and that it was a question which “must win,” but which could not “force its way,” while there was such a powerful array of Statesmen against it.

If these were the expressed sentiments (as indeed they were) of Mr. Canning before the unfavourable division in the House of Commons, it is quite clear that that event could only have tended to confirm them; while a more accurate knowledge which he had obtained in the recent discussions of His Majesty's unfavourable sentiments necessarily had the same effect. It would have completely ruined the cause if Mr. Canning had, in the forming a new Government, attempted to stipulate for concession. The only practical result of so doing, would have been to have thrown away the best prospect which the

question had of ultimate, and not very remote, settlement, by preventing the King from placing him at the head of the Government. It is obvious, therefore, since in Mr. Canning's opinion a Government united for the purpose of carrying emancipation (even supposing that the King had consented to its formation) could not have stood for any length of time, that he must have been desirous of mingling in its composition, those individuals, who entertained anti-Catholick sentiments: for nothing could be more mischievous than exciting such expectations of immediate concession among the Catholicks, as the formation upon principle of an exclusively Catholick Administration would necessarily have done, without a reasonable hope of their speedy fulfilment.

It being, therefore, Mr. Canning's desire to have those professing anti-Catholick opinions as members of his Government, where, it may be asked, could he have found men who were more eligible than the majority of his old anti-Catholick Colleagues? But not only for many reasons were these the most suitable whom he could have found, but it is no exaggeration to say that there were hardly any others in existence. The loss of Mr. Peel, in particular, was a serious source of sorrow to Mr. Canning, who would have made any sacrifice, consistent with his honour, to keep him. With these feelings

it was that he communicated severally to his Colleagues, the commands which he had received from His Majesty.

The nature of the answers returned to that communication, by Lord Harrowby, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Wynn, and Mr. Huskisson, it is needless here to state; but since the other ministers to whom it was addressed all eventually sent in their resignations, it will be necessary to refer separately to the course which each pursued.

To the Lord Chancellor Mr. Canning went in person: the age, the rank, the number of years during which Lord Eldon had been in the service of His Sovereign, were the considerations which induced Mr. Canning to pay this mark of respect to this distinguished, and venerable individual. The answer given by the learned Lord was, that he had long felt anxious to resign the Great Seal — that he had more than once tendered that resignation, but had been prevailed upon to reconsider his determination — that now on the forming of a new Government he notified his intention to carry it into execution, but that still he should wish to procrastinate the time, not for his own convenience, but on account of the business of his Court. That at about the end of four months he should have wound up its affairs, and as soon as he had so done, he should no longer delay his resignation.

Mr. Peel's determination was already known to Mr. Canning, and nothing new occurred at the interview between them.

Lord Bathurst answered by expressing his wish to see Mr. Canning.

Lord Melville's answer was not of a decided character.

Lord Bexley's was affirmative.

Lord Westmoreland could not "pledge himself until he knew in whose hands, and in what shape, the principal offices were to be ultimately cast."

In reply to this answer of Lord Westmoreland's, Mr. Canning took the liberty of pointing out to His Lordship, that "if every member of Lord Liverpool's Government, to whom letters had been addressed, or communications made simultaneously, were to defer his answer, until he knew the answer of all the others, no arrangement *could* ever be submitted to the King."

Mr. Canning availed himself of the opportunity to state that the principles of Lord Liverpool's administration were, "1st, The freedom of individual action and discussion to all Members of the Government, on what is called the Catholick Question, without prejudice to any man's fair political pretensions, on account of the opinion which he might happen to hold upon that Question.

“2dly, The maintenance of the existing system of foreign and domestick policy, and a cordial co-operation both in Parliament, and out of doors, in its support.”

The Duke of Wellington answered Mr. Canning's letter by an enquiry as to “ who was to be the individual whom he intended to recommend to the King to be at *the Head of the Government.*” To this enquiry Mr. Canning replied, that “ he believed it to be so generally understood that the King usually intrusted the formation of an Administration to the individual whom it was His Majesty's gracious intention to place at the head of it, that it did not occur to him, when he communicated to His Grace, on the preceding day, the commands which he had just received from His Majesty, to add, that in the present instance His Majesty did not intend to depart from the usual course of proceeding on such occasions.”

Mr. Canning further added, that he had laid the Duke's letter and the reply to it before the King.

The Duke answered this letter by expressing his wish that Mr. Canning “ would request His Majesty to excuse him from belonging to his Councils.” \*

Mr. Canning received His Grace's resignation

at 11 o'clock on the morning of the 12th of April.

The night before he had received Lord Westmoreland's. His Lordship thought that his "services could be neither beneficial to the "King nor to the Country, if the old Members "of the Cabinet did not continue to form a "Government upon the principles of Lord "Liverpool's, and if the chief office of the "Government was in the hands of a person of "different principles from Lord Liverpool."

Mr. Canning thought that it might have the appearance of acquiescence on his part, if he left unnoticed the insinuation that the nomination of a person favourable to the Catholicks, as the head of the Government, would be a departure from the principles of Lord Liverpool's Government. He therefore again took occasion to say that he always understood those principles to be free action and opinion upon the Catholick Question: and that if Lord Westmoreland meant that the first office of the Government was *always* to be in the hands of some person professing hostility to that question; and that no individual should ever be at the head of the Government who was of opinion that the Roman Catholick Question might be sooner or later beneficially settled," then Mr. Canning said "he learnt for the first time from Lord Westmoreland that such were

“ the principles of Lord Liverpool’s Government  
 “ — and he absolutely denied that, according  
 “ to any thing ever declared to him by Lord  
 “ Liverpool himself, to the last hour of their  
 “ intercourse, His Lordship ever understood his  
 “ own principles in that sense.”

A short reply from Lord Westmoreland, “ de-  
 “ clining to enter into a literary conflict upon  
 “ principles,” closed the correspondence.

The third resignation which Mr. Canning re-  
 ceived was the retraction of Lord Bexley. It  
 arrived about the same time with the Duke of  
 Wellington’s. With these three, together with  
 Mr. Peel’s, Mr. Canning went to an audience of  
 the King at St. James’s. He had scarcely left  
 his office when two letters arrived from Lords  
 Eldon and Bathurst, which being immediately  
 despatched to St. James’s, reached Mr. Canning  
 in the King’s closet. These letters contained  
 the resignations of these two ministers.

The Lord Chancellor in his letter declined  
 being “ a part of the new Administration to be  
 “ formed, as he then understood it was to be  
 “ constituted.” And it then appeared to His  
 Lordship “ to be impossible to maintain, that an  
 “ Administration under a Prime Minister sincere  
 “ and zealous in resistance to a measure sup-  
 “ posed to affect the Constitution, could really  
 “ be considered as an Administration existing  
 “ upon the same principles as an Administration

“ under a Prime Minister equally zealous and  
“ sincere in support of that measure, however  
“ the Administration under the other component  
“ parts of it might be formed.”

Lord Bathurst said that the resignations of those of his Colleagues, with whose opinions his own so closely coincided, had determined him no longer to withhold his own.

The effect which these resignations produced on the King's mind Mr. Canning has recorded in his speech in Parliament in which he gave an account of these transactions. That they were the result of combination on the part of these noble personages cannot be supposed, after their denial that they were so; but, the fact of five having been sent within eighteen hours, and four out of the five, within three, certainly made them assume the appearance of an attempt at intimidation. If, indeed, this had been the object, nothing could have been less calculated to answer the purpose. They who could have conceived such a project must have formed a very erroneous impression of those with whom they had to deal. The effects which it appears they produced in His Majesty's mind were displeasure with those who thus acted, and the confirmation of his resolution to support the Minister of his choice. Nor had Mr. Canning a heart to quail before difficulties: neither of them were appalled at these unexpected ob-

stacles. His Majesty forthwith confirmed Mr. Canning's appointment by giving him his hand to kiss; and Mr. Canning gave immediate directions for the moving of a new writ for the borough which he represented, and which he vacated in consequence of his appointment as First Lord of the Treasury. The announcement was received in the House of Commons with enthusiastick cheering.

On Mr. Canning's return from his audience another resignation awaited him, of all the most unaccountable. Lord Melville's letter throws little light upon his conduct. "The separation of his Colleagues was to such an extent that he felt that he could not do justice to Mr. Canning's Government if he were to remain in office," was all the explanation which it contained. Thus the list of Cabinet resignations was completed, there remaining only out of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet, Lord Harrowby, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. Wynn.

These, however, were not the only seceders from the Government. Besides four members of the King's Household, nine anti-Catholick members of the Government followed the example of their chief.

The Duke of Wellington likewise tendered to the King his resignation of the command of the army.

Mr. Canning's first object after this general defection of almost the whole of the anti-Catholick party in the Government was to find others holding the same opinions to replace them.

Lord Melville was the last of the confidential servants of the Crown who tendered his resignation, and his office was the first that was filled up.

At 6 o'clock in the evening of the 12th His Lordship's determination to resign became known to Mr. Canning ; and though such a declaration was one for which he was the least prepared, yet before the end of the following day Mr. Canning was enabled to inform His Lordship that he "had laid his letter before the " King ;" that " His Majesty had determined to " place the Duke of Clarence at the head of " the Admiralty ; that he had seen His Royal " Highness that night, and that His Royal " Highness would receive Sir George Cockburn, " and the other Lords of the Admiralty, at 12 " the next day."

The selection of the Heir Presumptive of the Throne to fill one of the most important offices in the new Ministry, and the promptness with which the arrangement was made and declared, produced the most decided effect upon the publick mind.

Those who had busied themselves in prophe-

syng that the new Minister would not hold his office beyond four and twenty hours, were obliged to lengthen to one week the term which they allowed for his official existence ; but notwithstanding they thus delayed the period of his downfall, they did not find many listeners who lent a believing ear to their predictions.

The good effects of this appointment had just begun to be apparent, when the hopes of the opposers of Mr. Canning were still further lessened by the announcement that the Master of the Rolls was to be the successor of Lord Eldon in the office of Lord Chancellor.

The angry feelings which the Catholick debate had engendered between them, it was thought, would not so speedily be forgotten by either party, as to allow of an early reconciliation ; but since the learned Gentleman openly avowed that he had no intention of acting offensively towards Mr. Canning, for whom he entertained a sincere respect, the unfriendly dispositions which, from misconception, had arisen in Mr. Canning's breast, were but of very ephemeral duration.

Shortly after the debate, they had met in the House of Commons, and shaken hands : so that, when the time arrived for proposing to the Master of the Rolls to succeed Lord Eldon, Mr. Canning had no hesitation in writing to request the favour of seeing him, or in concluding his letter by saying, " Believe me, my dear sir, (Phill-

“potto non obstante) very sincerely yours.” To this letter the Master of the Rolls replied that he would come; and followed Mr. Canning’s example of putting the pith in his conclusion, which was “Believe me, now, as always, (minus 24 hours,) yours very sincerely.”

Thus then ended for ever, between them, all the estrangement which had been produced more by untoward circumstances than by any fault on either side.

Before the 18th of April Lord Anglesey had accepted a seat in the Cabinet, with the Master Generalship of the Ordnance, which had been vacated by the Duke of Wellington.

Thus three of the highest Offices of the State were filled with those whose votes had been hostile to the Catholicks; added to which Lord Bexley had consented to retain his office in compliance with the King’s earnest request.

But though these were the only successful efforts which Mr. Canning made to supply the places of the seceders, with the professors of anti-Catholick opinions, they were not the only ones, which he made to fulfil the wishes of his Sovereign.

There still remained, therefore, several vacancies to be filled up. In this state of things Mr. Canning determined to invite those members of the Whig party to join him, of whose friendly dispositions towards himself individually, from

their approval of his principles and measures, he was well assured.

There was less difficulty in coming to this conclusion, on account of the state in which were at that moment the only two questions of importance on which there was any difference of opinion between them.

The success of any attempt to carry Parliamentary Reform was then hopeless, and the existence of the Test Act was practically harmless, so that to have been making stipulations either for the carrying of the one measure, or the repeal of the other, would have been to have sacrificed real practical good, for the sake of a speculative benefit, which there was not then any chance of obtaining.

Mr. Canning did not expect, nor did he find any difficulty upon these two questions; indeed, with respect to Parliamentary Reform, Lord Lansdowne, the individual for whose co-operation he was chiefly solicitous, had never committed himself to an opinion on either side.

With respect to Catholick Emancipation, there was no difference of opinion, — all were anxious to promote its success; and indeed the similarity of sentiment on this question was the great bond of union between the parties.

On the failure, then, of Mr Canning's efforts to form a Government in which the Catholick and Protestant par. were equally repre-

sented, he opened a negotiation with the Whig party through the medium of Lord Lansdowne, with whom he had a meeting on the 19th of April. He then explained the position of the Government, and the principles by which it was intended to be guided with respect to the Catholick Question, Parliamentary Reform, and the repeal of the Test Act. The first of these was to remain "in Lord Liverpool's Government an open question, upon which each member of the Cabinet was to be at perfect liberty to exercise his own judgment in supporting that question, if brought forward by others, or in propounding it either in the Cabinet or to Parliament. But if any member of the Cabinet should deem it an indispensable duty to bring forward individually the Catholick Question in Parliament, he was distinctly to state that he did so in his individual capacity.

" In the second place, the inconvenience of having one open question in the Cabinet made it more necessary to agree that there should be no other. All the then existing Members of the Cabinet were united in opposing the question of Parliamentary Reform, and could not acquiesce in its being brought forward, or supported by any Member of the Cabinet.

" The then Members of the Cabinet were also united in opposition to the repeal of the Test Act. They ~~saw~~ great inexpediency in

“ stirring a question which had slept for thirty  
 “ years ; and they could not consent to a divided  
 “ vote by the Members of the Cabinet upon it.”

Lord Lansdowne returned no answer until after a consultation with his friends, when Mr. Canning received from him the intimation that they were “ satisfied that, the “ the Roman Catholick Question having been “ recently disposed of in the House of Com-“ mons, circumstances rendered it inexpedient “ at this time to bring that measure forward as “ a Cabinet measure : but they reserved a right, “ under any change of circumstances, to be “ judged of by the discretion of the individual, “ to bring it forward as a Cabinet measure.

“ Second, That the Goverment of Ireland “ should be composed of individuals not opposed “ to the removal of the Catholick Disabilities.”

It was also stated that “ an unanimous opinion “ was expressed, on the part of Lord Lans-“ downe’s friends, that in the event of his ac-“ ceding to the Administration now forming by “ Mr. Canning, no other individual should take “ precedence of Lord Lansdowne in the debates “ of the House of Lords.

“ It was further said, that if these views “ should meet His Majesty’s gracious appro-“ bation, Lord Lansdowne was prepared to dis-“ cuss with Mr. Canning such further arrange-“ ments as might present themselves.”

'This intimation was accompanied by a memorandum, which is so creditable to both parties, that it is given verbatim as it was received :—

*"Lansdowne House, April 19. 1827.*

" If the principles and arrangements suggested  
 " in the paper (which is quoted above) are con-  
 " sidered inadmissible at present, I owe it to the  
 " perfect fairness, manliness, and candour of Mr.  
 " Canning's proceedings towards myself, as well  
 " as to the strong sense I entertain of the im-  
 " portance of his services to the Publick at the  
 " present juncture, to state that I shall give a  
 " cordial support to his Government, in the full  
 " confidence that it will act, and continue to act,  
 " in the spirit which I anticipate, and I shall be  
 " ready to give every indication of it on any  
 " opportunity which arises."

With the conditions, however, intimated in Lord Lansdowne's communication, Mr. Canning could not comply. The difference upon the Catholick Claims was so trivial, that there would have been little difficulty in coming to a mutual understanding, upon a question for the success of which both parties were equally anxious. But before any negotiation had been opened with Lord Lansdowne, it had been arranged that Mr. Robinson should be created a Peer, and should be leader in the House of

Lords, — and from this arrangement it was not in Mr. Canning's power to recede. Neither could he make (and this was the real difficulty) any concession, *in principle*, with respect to the composition of the Government of Ireland, although it had been settled that Lord Wellesley should remain to the end of the year; and from the absolute impossibility of finding an Anti-Catholick to fill the post of Irish Secretary, he was, subsequently, forced to nominate an individual friendly to the Catholicks to that situation.

Upon these points the negotiations were broken off. But as soon as this became known to the Whigs, a large portion of them were strong in their expressions of regret and disappointment. Their sentiments were not concealed from Mr. Canning, who received from mutual friends more than one intimation of their wish that the matter should be kept open.

The negotiations were therefore renewed, and it was finally settled that, at the close of the Session, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Carlisle, and Mr. Tierney should have seats in the Cabinet. The difficulty respecting the Irish Government being got over, by the unavoidable appointment of an Anti-Catholick; and the lead in the House of Lords, on which Lord Lansdowne's friends had laid so much stress, was settled without disparagement to Lord Lansdowne, in favour of

Lord Goderich, from the circumstance of the latter being necessarily in possession of that situation previous to the junction of the former with the Government.

It was likewise settled, that the Duke of Devonshire as Lord Chamberlain, and Mr. Scarlett as Attorney-General, should take office immediately.

In the mean while, however, it was necessary to fill up the vacant offices.

For this purpose Mr. Canning sought assistance amongst his personal friends. The Duke of Portland, to whom on the first failure of the negotiation with the Whigs Mr. Canning had applied, and by whom office was any thing but coveted, in the most handsome manner consented to accept the Privy Seal ; Lord Dudley likewise accepted the seals of the Foreign Department ; and Mr. Sturges Bourne, having more than once refused office altogether, reluctantly consented to hold those of the Home Department.

Thus the task of the formation of the new Ministry was completed ; and on the 27th of April the different appointments were made known to the publick.

In the arrangement of the new Cabinet, of the five members of it, who had belonged to the old one, two, Mr. Canning and Mr. Robinson, changed their situations — and three, Lord Harrowby, Mr. Wynn, and Mr. Huskisson, con-

tinued in their former offices. When it was determined that Mr. Robinson should be called to the Upper House, it followed that he could no longer act as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he accordingly was appointed to a Cabinet Office, which was tenable with a seat in the House of Lords. Mr. Canning, as has been already stated, succeeded Lord Liverpool; and when the necessity for filling up the vacancy occasioned by Mr. Robinson's removal arose, he decided, for reasons which will be mentioned hereafter, connected with the Budget, to unite, as Mr. Pitt had done, the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer with that of First Lord of the Treasury. Lord Harrowby retained the Presidency of the Council, Mr. Wynn remained at the Board of Control, and Mr. Huskisson continued at the Board of Trade. Lord Palmerston, as Secretary of War, had a seat in the Cabinet.

With respect to the Law arrangements, Lord Lyndhurst being appointed Chancellor, it was proposed to Mr. Plunket, who was at that time Attorney-General for Ireland, to succeed to the Rolls, with a Peerage. Mr. Plunket accepted the office; but, on finding the profession in England adverse to that judicial post being held by an Irish lawyer, with a high-mindedness that reflected on him the highest credit, he resigned the appointment.

Sir John Leach accepted the Mastership of the Rolls.

Sir Antony Hart succeeded Sir John Leach as Vice-Chancellor; and Mr. Abercrombie was the successor of Sir John Beckett in the office of Judge-Advocate.

Lord Anglesey was named as Lord Wellesley's successor at the close of the year, and Lord William Bentinck was nominated by the joint concurrence of the Government and the Company to succeed Lord Amherst, who had determined to resign his government.

This was the last great political appointment which was made either directly by Mr. Canning, or under his immediate auspices.

## CHAP. XIX.

DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT RESPECTING THE FORMATION  
OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.—EXPLANATIONS OF  
MR. CANNING AND MR. PELI IN THE HOUSE OF  
COMMONS.—EXPLANATION OF LORD ELDON.—  
SPEECH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.—MR. CANN-  
NING'S LETTER IN ANSWER TO THAT SPEECH, AND  
THE REPLY.—EXPLANATIONS OF THE OTHER EX-  
MINISTERS.

THE transactions connected with the formation of the New Ministry having been fully detailed, it remains to be seen how the several parties explained, and vindicated their principles, and conduct, to Parliament and the Country.

The House of Commons met on the 1st of May ; and on the moving of a new writ for Ashburton, in consequence of Mr. Sturges Bourne, the Member for that Borough, having accepted the Seals of the Home Department, Mr. Peel rose to offer some explanation as to the grounds on which he thought himself compelled to retire

from the service of His Majesty. The substance of that explanation may be shortly stated to have been that, having all his life been a conscientious opposer of the Catholick claims, and Mr. Canning having been for many years their most powerful supporter, he thought that, although he had been a member of Lord Liverpool's Government, which was divided upon that question, yet that he could not consent to a complete transfer of all the influence and power which belong to the office of Prime Minister from the opponents to the advocates of concession to the Catholicks; especially a transfer, not from one ordinary man, to another ordinary man, but from the most powerful opponent of the Catholick Claims, to their most powerful advocate.

Mr. Peel likewise explained the peculiar unpleasantness attaching to the Office of Home Secretary if held by an individual differing in opinion on this question from the head of the Government; but it must not be supposed that this had much effect in influencing his determination wholly to withdraw himself, since Mr. Canning had offered him, to obviate all difficulties on this score, the Seals of the Foreign Department.

Throughout his speech he adopted a friendly tone towards the new Premier, with whom he seemed anxious to identify himself in justifying

his own conduct, by referring to Mr. Canning's example, under what Mr. Peel thought similar circumstances. He unhesitatingly declared that if it had not been for the Catholick Question he would have "acted with, or under," Mr. Canning; and that their difference on that question was his only objection "to embark under his 'pilotage.'

Mr. Duncombe and Sir Thomas Lethbridge pronounced panegyricks on Mr. Peel.

Sir Francis Burdett declared his intention to support the present Government, as "the best "opportunity he had yet met with of promoting "the cause of civil and religious liberty;" upon which Mr. Dawson took occasion to observe, that if the Catholick question was not brought forward at once as a Cabinet measure, Sir Francis Burdett and his friends were parties to an "un- "naturally base coalition;" and made it a matter of charge against Mr. Canning, that he had not *fulfilled* the King's commands, in forming a Government equally divided upon that question.

Mr. Brougham answered Mr. Dawson in a speech of cutting irony, and explained the grounds of the coalition. He declared that he did not expect the Catholick question to be made a Cabinet measure; and exposed the artifice of its enemies, in recommending its being immediately brought forward, by showing that the so doing could only have the effect of retarding the period

of its triumph ; especially if it were done at that moment when, by Mr. Dawson's own statements, it appeared that the difficulties, which still stood in its way were increasing, rather than diminishing.

Mr. Canning followed Mr. Brougham, and, after expressions of great cordiality towards Mr. Peel, gave an account of his conduct with respect to the formation of the Government, which have been detailed in the preceding chapter. He refuted the charge brought against him by Mr. Dawson, by remarking that it was owing to the Protestant part of the Administration having withdrawn themselves, and to others, who thought with them, refusing to take their places, that the fulfilment of the King's commands had been rendered impossible.

His defence of the Whigs for supporting him must be given in his own words : — “ My Right Honourable Friend, Mr. Peel,” observed Mr. Canning, “ said, how should it be possible when “ I have been advanced to the high situation in “ which I now stand, that without saying or “ doing any thing actively, or expressly, to pro- “ mote the success of the Catholick question, my “ existence nevertheless in that situation, and “ other contingent results arising out of it, but “ for which I am not responsible, should not be “ a great moral advancement of that cause? Sir, “ I cannot deny the general truth of this pro-

" position ; and in the admission of that identical  
 " fact will be found the obvious answer to the  
 " taunts of the Honourable Baronet \* opposite at  
 " the support which the present government are  
 " now receiving from the gentlemen of the late  
 " opposition. Why have these gentlemen sup-  
 " ported me ? Because they saw in the aspect of  
 " the present state of things, exactly the same  
 " tendency, which my Right Honourable Friend  
 " has seen towards the moral advancement of  
 " that great question ; namely, that without my  
 " official interference, indeed, with my present  
 " inaction, they behold a prospect of considerable  
 " improvement in a question for which they feel  
 " with me a common interest.

" If so, it is a good reason why I should have  
 " their support, and equally so for my Right  
 " Honourable Friend to oppose me ; but it is a  
 " little too much for an Honourable Member to  
 " say, that the reason is good on one side and bad  
 " on the other, whilst both parties concur in  
 " anticipating the same result. If my Right  
 " Honourable Friend is justified in resigning,  
 " because with my passive existence in the office  
 " of Premier the Catholick question must thrive,  
 " surely the same reason holds good, for my  
 " receiving the support of other gentlemen, who

\* Sir Thomas Lethbridge.

“contemplate in the success of that question the  
“tranquillity and consolidation of the Empire.”

Mr. Canning then stated the actual position of that question in the Cabinet—“that it was a question which each member of the Government was at liberty, if he pleased, to bring forward in the Cabinet or to propound to Parliament; but if any member of the Government should so bring it forward in either House of Parliament, he was bound distinctly to state that he did so in his individual capacity only, and not as pledging his Colleagues to his own opinions on the subject.” In short, the position was the same in which it was placed in 1812, and in which it had then stood successively for fifteen years.

He concluded by restating, that had he given up the Premiership to an anti-Catholick he would have been dishonoured by submitting to the exemplification in his person of a principle of exclusion from that high post of an individual holding his opinions: a submission which would have been “the badge of his helotism, and the indelible disgrace of his political existence.”

A very favourable impression was produced on the Country by the explanations of the new Premier and the ex-Secretary. The principles by which they had been respectively actuated seemed at once just, and intelligible, while their mode of carrying them into effect had been

frank, and honourable, towards each other, and their Colleagues.

The House of Lords met on the following day, when Lord ~~Ely~~ Brough called upon the ex-Ministers to state the "circumstances attending their resignation." Lord Eldon immediately rose, and contented himself with denying that he had acted in concert with any one, in respect to the tender of his resignation.

The Duke of Wellington followed Lord Eldon. The day after the debate Mr. Canning addressed a letter to the Duke commenting on some parts of His Grace's Speech — to which letter His Grace replied.

It was Mr. Canning's recorded intention to have published these two letters, an intention which his death alone prevented him from carrying into execution. First, however, he had determined to give notice of his purpose to the Duke, although His Grace had made use, in the House of Lords, of the first four letters of the correspondence, "without any previous notice to Mr. Canning of his intention to do so."

The Duke's speech is given *in extenso*; to which Mr. Canning's letter and His Grace's reply, are added.

" My Lords,—I do not intend to trouble your Lordships with a discussion on the subject of this Petition, or to dispute with the Noble Lord (Grosvenor) whether the Petitioners, seeking for further concessions to the

Roman Catholicks, have chosen the time most propitious to the prayer of their Petition, considering that the Administration are favourably disposed to grant such concessions; but my object in claiming Your Lordships attention is, to answer the call, the Noble Baron on my right.

“ There is no man more sensible than I am, that the House of Lords have nothing to say to the changes which may take place in His Majesty’s Councils. It is His Majesty’s prerogative to appoint his own Ministers, and to change them as he pleases; and the House of Lords cannot take into consideration the special circumstances under which such changes have been made, except in particular cases, in which an administration has been removed in consequence of an address from this House. I have, therefore, to apologize to Your Lordships for taking up your time upon this subject; for which my only excuse is the manner in which I have been treated by the corrupt press, in the pay of the Government.

“ I do not mean to attribute this misconduct to the Noble Lords personally (the Ministers sitting in the House); but the fact is certain, that I have been accused, in these recent transactions, of conspiracy, combination, dictation to my Sovereign, and nearly every crime, short of high treason, of which a subject could be guilty; and I should be more than man if I could resist availing myself of the opportunity of justifying myself, which the question of the Noble Baron has given me.

“ My Lords, my conduct has been called in question in two respects; first, my quitting the Cabinet; secondly, my resignation of the command of the army. I do not consider that I have any right to reveal any thing that ever passed in conversation with His Majesty, or in his Councils; but fortunately I can elucidate my conduct

without making such disclosures; and without disclosing any fact mentioned to me in conversation, which was not likewise mentioned to others. I must trouble Your Lordships with some details upon this subject: but Your Lordships may rely upon it that I will detain you as short a time as possible.

“ On the evening of the 10th of April, I received from the Right Honourable Gentleman now at the head of His Majesty’s Councils, a letter, which I am about to read to the House.

“ ‘ Foreign Office,  
“ ‘ April 10th, 6 P.M. 1827.

“ ‘ My dear Duke of Wellington,— The King has, at an audience, from which I am just returned, been graciously pleased to signify to me His Majesty’s commands, to lay before His Majesty, with as little loss of time as possible, a plan of arrangements for the reconstruction of the Administration. — In executing these commands, it will be as much my own wish, as it is my duty to His Majesty, to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool’s Government has so long acted together. — I need not add how essentially the accomplishment must depend upon Your Grace’s continuing a member of the Cabinet.

“ ‘ Ever, my dear Duke of Wellington, Your Grace’s sincere and faithful servant,

“ ‘ GEORGE CANNING.

“ ‘ To His Grace the Duke of Wellington.’

“ I beg Your Lordships will observe that this letter does not state of whom it was intended that the proposed Administration should be formed, although I have since learned that that information was conveyed to my colleagues; nor who was to be at the head of the Government; nor was I invited, as others were, to receive

further explanations, nor referred to any body who could give such; nor indeed did I consider the invitation that I should belong to the Cabinet, to be conveyed in those terms to which I had been accustomed in my constant intercourse with the Right Honourable Gentleman up to that moment, nor to have been calculated to induce me to continue in the Administration about to be formed. I was determined, however, that I would not allow such considerations to influence my answer: and I wrote to the Right Honourable Gentleman, on the same night, what I am about to read to the House.

“ ‘ London, April 10. 1827.

“ ‘ My dear Mr. Canning, — I have received your letter of this evening, informing me that the King had desired you to lay before His Majesty a plan for the reconstruction of the Administration; and that, in executing these commands, it was your wish to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool’s government had so long acted together. — I anxiously desire to be able to serve His Majesty, as I have done hitherto in his Cabinet, with the same colleagues. But before I can give an answer to your obliging proposition, I should wish to know who the person is whom you intend to propose to His Majesty as the head of the Government?

“ ‘ Ever, my dear Mr. Canning, yours most sincerely,

“ ‘ WELLINGTON.

“ ‘ The Right Hon. George Canning.’

“ The House will observe, that I expressed my anxious desire to form part of a Cabinet, with ‘ the same colleagues’ — the Right Honourable Gentleman having omitted all mention of colleagues in his letter to me — but that I postponed to give my answer to what I termed

his ‘ obliging proposition’ (although I think it was scarcely an invitation), till I should learn the name of the person intended to be recommended by the Right Honourable Gentleman to His Majesty as the head of the Administration. To this note the Right Honourable Gentleman wrote me, on the afternoon of the 11th, the answer which I am about to read to the House.

“ ‘ *Foreign Office, April 11. 1827.*

“ ‘ My dear Duke of Wellington,— I believed it to be so generally understood that the King usually intrusts the formation of an Administration to the individual whom it is His Majesty’s gracious intention to place at the head of it, that it did not occur to me, when I communicated to Your Grace yesterday the commands which I had just received from His Majesty, to add, that in the present instance, His Majesty does not intend to depart from the usual course of proceedings on such occasions. — I am sorry to have delayed some hours this answer to Your Grace’s letter; but from the nature of the subject, I did not like to forward it without having previously submitted it (together with Your Grace’s letter) to His Majesty.

“ ‘ Ever, my dear Duke of Wellington, Your Grace’s sincere and faithful servant,

“ ‘ **GEORGE CANNING.**

“ ‘ **His Grace the Duke of Wellington.**’

“ I will postpone my observations upon this answer for a few minutes; and I will only request the House to remark here, that it was not calculated to remove the impression which the Right Honourable Gentleman’s first letter had made upon my mind; namely, that he did not wish me to belong to the Cabinet.

“ However, as the House will observe from my reply, that impression was not the reason which influenced my

conduct in desiring to retire from the Cabinet; nor did that impression, or the tone and temper of the Right Honourable Gentleman's letters to me, influence the tone and temper of my answers to the Right Honourable Gentleman. This is what I wrote to him, in answer to his letter of the 11th.

*"London, April 11. 1827.*

" ' My dear Mr. Canning,—I have received your letter of this day; and I did not understand the one of yesterday evening as you have now explained it to me.—I understood from yourself, that you had had in contemplation another arrangement, and I do not believe that the practice to which you refer has been so invariable as to enable me to affix a meaning to your letter, which its words did not in my opinion convey. I trust that you will have experienced no inconvenience from the delay of this answer, which I assure you has been occasioned by my desire to discover a mode by which I could continue united with my recent colleagues.—I sincerely wish that I could bring my mind to the conclusion that, with the best intentions on your part, your Government could be conducted practically on the principles of that of Lord Liverpool; that it would be generally so considered; or that it would be adequate to meet our difficulties in a manner satisfactory to the King, or conducive to the interests of the country.—As, however, I am convinced that these principles must be abandoned, ~~eventually~~; that all our measures would be viewed with suspicion by the usual supporters of the Government; that I could do no good in the Cabinet; and that at last I should be obliged to separate myself from it, at the moment at which such separation would be more inconvenient to the King's service than it can be at present, I must beg you to request His Majesty to excuse me from belonging to His Councils.

“ ‘ Ever, my dear Mr. Canning, yours most sincerely,

“ ‘ WELLINGTON.’

“ I will here leave the question of my retirement from the Cabinet. I have no objection, if Noble Lords choose, to discuss all the reasons stated in this letter; but I believe it is better to avoid such discussion. I will, however, observe that the events which have occurred in the short space of time which has elapsed since the termination of this correspondence will tend to show that I did not form an incorrect judgment of the matters described in my letter of the 11th of April; and I am much mistaken if experience does not prove hereafter that I was quite right.

“ But before I go into the discussion of my reasons for resigning the command of the army, I will address a few words to Your Lordships, upon the charges which have been made against me.

“ I am accused of having deserted and abandoned my Sovereign. My Lords, I have always considered that the most important of all the acts which the Sovereign of this country has to perform, is the choice of His Ministers; and most particularly the selection of that person who is to fill the office of First Minister.

“ In making this choice, the Sovereign determines upon what principle of policy his Domestick Government or his Foreign Relations are to be conducted; and he chooses the men to administer His Government whose opinions are consistent with those according to which His Majesty has decided that the policy of the Government shall be guided.

“ I will now apply this principle to the case which has recently occurred; and I will suppose that His Majesty has selected a gentleman to be His First Minister, who differs in opinion from His Majesty upon an important question of domestick policy, such as the question of

further concessions to the Roman Catholicks ; and that I being called to His Majesty's Councils, agree in opinion with His Majesty, but differ from His Minister. My Lords, in these cases there can be no secret understandings in this country. Men must act openly and fairly, whether in Parliament or in the Cabinet. His Majesty and the Country would look to me, and to those in the Cabinet who should entertain the same opinions as me, that the acts of the Government should be consistent with its professed policy ; whereas I should find those acts daily leading to a different result. I beg Your Lordships will refer to what the Right Honourable Gentleman himself (Mr. Canning) said on a former occasion, of the nature of the preponderating influence of a First Minister in such questions, and particularly in this question of domestick policy ; and to observe the arguments of the Noble Lord (Grosvenor) in the commencement of this discussion, which had for their object to prove to Your Lordships, that nothing ought to be done by Your Lordships or the publick upon the Roman Catholick Question at the present moment ; because the concession of every thing was certain, in consequence only of the nomination of the Right Honourable Gentleman as First Minister.

“ While adverting to this part of the subject, I beg leave to suggest to Your Lordships an important distinction between Lord Liverpool and the Right Honourable Gentleman. The object of Lord Liverpool's policy was not to take any thing from the Roman Catholicks, but to govern the Country fairly and impartially according to the existing laws. That of the Right Honourable Gentleman (who, it must be remembered, is the most able and active of all the partizans of the other side of the question,) is, to make an important alteration of the laws. The action of the two systems cannot be compared. Lord Liverpool might act impartially ; and,

as his Cabinet was, he was under the necessity of acting, even if it could be supposed that his desire was to act otherwise. But the influence of the Right Honourable Gentleman's Government must have the effect, even if not so desired by him, of forwarding his own opinions and views of policy, notwithstanding his professions of an adherence to the policy of Lord Liverpool's Government.

" I would ask, then, how it was possible for me to go into the Cabinet, and give the Right Honourable Gentleman that fair confidence and support which, as Head of the Government, he would have had a right to claim from me, when I knew that the necessary result of his system must be to bring the Government to that state, which I think, and which His Majesty is supposed to think, one of peril? His Majesty, however, thought proper to appoint the Right Honourable Gentleman to be his Minister; and I had no resource but to withdraw.

" But it has been stated, that I withdrew myself because His Majesty would not submit to my dictation and threats, in case I should not myself be appointed his Minister; and this accusation is most curiously coupled with another, namely, that His Majesty offered to make me His Minister, and that I refused.

" My Lords, those know but little of His Majesty who suppose that any man can dare to dictate to him, much less threaten him. My Lords, His Majesty never offered to me to make me His Minister. His Majesty knew as well as I did, that I was and must be totally out of the question; and I so considered myself, and so stated myself repeatedly; and I was no party to any suggestion that I should be the person to fill the vacancy occasioned by the misfortune which we all deplore.

" Do Your Lordships suppose, that having raised myself to the highest rank in the profession which I had previously followed from my youth; that having been

appointed to the highest situation in that profession, for I may say I raised myself without indicating any desire to under-rate my obligations to my noble, gallant friends, the general Officers of the Army, by whom I am surrounded, and still less those which I owe to His Majesty for His most gracious favour and kindness, — I may safely say, that His Majesty could not have placed me where I was, if I had not rendered some service to the State deserving of His approbation? — I say, then, that having raised myself to such a station in my profession, I could not be desirous of leaving it in order to seek to be appointed to be the Head of the Government, a situation for which I am sensible that I am not qualified; and to which, moreover, neither His Majesty nor the Right Honourable Gentleman, nor any wished to see me called.

“ Do Your Lordships think it possible, that I was not gratified by being restored to my old relations of command over my old friends and companions; and to have attained the power of recommending them to His Majesty for the professional reward of their services, after having passed my life in exciting and directing their exertions?

“ Does any man believe that I would give up such gratification in order to be appointed to a station to the duties of which I was unaccustomed, in which I was not wished, and for which I was not qualified; as it must be obvious to Your Lordships that, not being in the habits of addressing Your Lordships, I should have been found, besides other disqualifications, incapable of displaying as they ought to be displayed, or of defending the measures of Government as they ought to be defended, in this House, by the person thus honoured by His Majesty’s confidence? My Lords, I should have been worse than mad if had thought of such a thing.

“ Then, my Lords, it is said that I endeavoured to

attain this object by means of concert, conspiracy, and combination with others. My Lords, I assert, that till I wrote to the Right Honourable Gentleman the letter of the 14th of April, which I have read to Your Lordships, no man knew what line I intended to follow. If I concerted, conspired, and combined with any body, let it be said with whom.

\* "There were thirteen of us in the Cabinet. The hand of Providence has deprived us of one: and there are six, including the Right Honourable Gentleman himself, still remaining in the Cabinet. My Right Honourable Friend, the Member for the University of Oxford, is unanimously acquitted; but I would ask the Noble Lords present, whether they ever heard of any thing like the acts with which we have been charged? There is my Noble Friend, the Chancellor of the Duchy, who resigned his office, and was afterwards induced to accept it again, did he ever hear of any thing like conspiracy, and the other crimes with which we have been charged? If he has, I beg him to inform his present Colleagues and the House of the facts. If he has not, and I know he has not, I call upon any man to come forward and say if he knows that such conspiracy or combination existed, and I will engage to prove that it is false that I ever was a party to such.

" The other point to which I wish to draw Your Lordships' attention, is my resignation of the command of the Army, which I conveyed to His Majesty in a letter dated April the 12th, of which I will now read to Your Lordships the extract applicable to the subject.

" ' Mr. Canning will, I doubt not, have submitted to Your Majesty the letter which I have written to him in answer to the one announcing to me, that he had been appointed by Your Majesty to be at the head of Your Government. — I have frequently had occasion to ex-

press to Your Majesty my most grateful acknowledgments for Your Majesty's most gracious favour and kindness towards me; and Your Majesty can now more easily conceive than I can express the pain and grief which I feel upon requesting Your Majesty to excuse me from attendance in your councils; and in consequence thereof, and adverting to the tenour of the letters which I have received from Your Majesty's Minister by Your Majesty's command, upon asking Your Majesty's permission to lay at your feet those offices which connect me with Your Majesty's Government.'

" My Lords, I held two offices under His Majesty's Government, that of Commander-in-Chief, and that of Master-General of the Ordnance. Having declared to the Right Honourable Gentleman, that I could not serve in the Cabinet presided by him, my Office of Master-General of the Ordnance became vacant. I might still have continued to hold the Office of Commander-in-Chief, notwithstanding the political circumstances, as set forth in my letter of the 11th, which separated me from the Councils of the Government. My illustrious and lamented predecessor in Office had done so; and I should have followed his example in this respect, as I had endeavoured to do in others. Indeed, I never could see any reason why political differences of opinion should prevent me from commanding the Army at the Horse Guards more than they would an Army in the field, if circumstances should render it necessary so to employ my services. But besides political circumstances, the tone and temper of the Right Honourable Gentleman's letters, and particularly of that of the 11th, (which had been previously submitted to His Majesty, and was, therefore, a communication from the King,) were of a nature to make it impossible for me to retain the command of the Army.

" My Lords, I must trouble you with a short statement

of the nature of the Office of Commander-in-Chief; and of its relations towards His Majesty on the one hand, and the Right Honourable Gentleman on the other. The Commander-in-Chief must necessarily be daily in confidential relations with His Majesty on all points of the service. He must likewise be so with the person filling the situation filled by the Right Honourable Gentleman. . Although the Commander-in-Chief has nothing to say to the Finance of the Army, yet there are questions under discussion every day respecting allowances to Officers and Soldiers, and expenses of every description, upon which the Right Honourable Gentleman cannot decide in a satisfactory manner, unless after reference to the Commander-in-Chief.

“ But this is not all. If the Right Honourable Gentleman wishes to reinforce or diminish the Army in Portugal, or to recall it altogether, he must consult with the person holding the office of Commander-in-Chief.

“ In the same manner the reinforcement of the troops in any of His Majesty’s possessions abroad or at home must be a matter of concert with the Commander-in-Chief: and the Right Honourable Gentleman will find, when he comes to make up his budget, that he must concert his arrangements with the Commander-in-Chief. How was it possible for me to consider that I was likely to possess the Right Honourable Gentleman’s confidence on any of these points, after receiving from him, in His Majesty’s name, such a rebuke as was contained in his letter to me of the 11th ?

“ But it has been stated by the Right Honourable Gentleman’s friends, that I had given him cause of offence by my letter of the 10th, and had provoked his answer of the 11th; and it is but fair to consider that letter, and to see whether it did give the Right Honourable Gentleman any ground to complain. That letter contained a clear, distinct answer to the one which I had

received from the Right Honourable Gentleman, as far as I was enabled to give it in the usual terms of my constant correspondence with the Right Honourable Gentleman. I stated my anxious desire to remain in the Cabinet with 'my recent colleagues ;' and for the purpose of receiving information I asked who was to be at the Head of the Government, in hopes that the information which I should receive might be such as to enable me to belong to the Cabinet.

" I must here inform Your Lordships, that in a conversation which I had had with the Right Honourable Gentleman, on the 2d of April, he had explained to me that in case His Majesty should commission him to suggest arrangements for the reconstruction of the Administration, the plan which he had in contemplation was, to propose, that the Right Honourable Gentleman, late the Chancellor of the Exchequer, should be called to the House of Lords, and be made First Lord of the Treasury ; and in case the Right Honourable Gentleman had, in answer to my letter of the 10th, informed me that he still had that plan in contemplation, it was my intention to suggest to him, and to endeavour to persuade him to adopt one better calculated, in my opinion, to keep the Government united. Your Lordships will see, therefore, that the question asked in my letter of the 10th was fully justified, and fairly founded, upon a communication made me on the 2d of April, by the Right Honourable Gentleman himself. The question was fully justified likewise by former practice.

" In the year 1812, a noble relation of mine (now Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland), waited upon a Noble Earl, now in this House (Grey), and a Noble Lord (Grenville), whose absence on account of illness nobody laments more than I do, by command of His Majesty, then Prince Regent, with a view to consider of the formation of an

Administration; and Lord Wellesley, in the course of the discussion upon that subject, declared, that he considered himself merely as the instrument of executing the Commands of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent on that occasion. He even went so far as to say that he neither claimed nor desired for himself any share in the Administration. Upon the same occasion the Right Honourable Gentleman himself apprized Lord Liverpool, on the part of Lord Wellesley, that the Prince Regent had laid these commands on Lord Wellesley.

“ Subsequently in the same year, 1812, Lord Moira had the Prince Regent’s instructions to take steps towards the formation of a new Ministry. It does not appear that Lord Moira, or the Noble Earl, or the Noble Baron, to whom he addressed himself, considered that he was to be the Head of the Administration which he had a commission to form. In addressing this House on the 12th of June, His Lordship said, ‘ I came to the subject unfettered in every way; not an individual was named for a seal; and no place was pointed out even for myself.’

“ How then, my Lords, could I take it for granted, that His Majesty had nominated the Right Honourable Gentleman to be his First Minister, only because the Right Honourable Gentleman informed me that His Majesty had signified to him his commands to lay before His Majesty a plan of arrangements for the reconstruction of the Administration?

“ It is obvious that I could not give the Right Honourable Gentleman an answer to his proposition, that I should be one of the Cabinet, till I should ascertain who was to be the Prime Minister; and the necessity of ascertaining this point was my only motive for asking the question.

“ I will now show from the best authority possible —

that of the Right Honourable Gentleman himself — that the question might be asked without offence.

“ On the — of May, 1812, Mr. Perceval having just then been assassinated, Lord Liverpool waited upon the Right Honourable Gentleman, by command of His Majesty, then Prince Regent, to invite the Right Honourable Gentleman to become a Member of His Majesty’s Councils. The first question, it appears from a memorandum drawn by the Right Honourable Gentleman himself, which the Right Honourable Gentleman asked was, Who is to be the First Lord of the Treasury ? and it does not appear that the Noble Lord rebuked the Right Honourable Gentleman for asking that question.

“ The negotiation failed for other reasons, not worth discussing at present, excepting to observe, that the Right Honourable Gentleman then thought that the influence of the Head of the Government was likely to be paramount in the discussion of the Roman Catholic Question. Surely, my Lords, I could not merit a rebuke for asking the Right Honourable Gentleman in 1827, the same question which he, under nearly similar circumstances, asked Lord Liverpool in 1812.

“ But, my Lords, there is another view of the case, which ought to be taken. Although I was rebuked on the 11th for asking this question on the 10th, and was told that the practice was so generally understood that it did not occur to the Right Honourable Gentleman to add, that His Majesty did not intend to depart from the usual course of proceeding on such occasions ; the fact is, that the Right Honourable Gentleman was not appointed His Majesty’s Minister till the afternoon of the 12th, according to what he has stated himself in another place.

“ Indeed, my Lords, it appears very clearly, from the Right Honourable Gentleman’s letter to me of the 11th,

that till he had laid my letter of the 10th before His Majesty he had not been appointed his Minister. If he had, he might, without reference to His Majesty, have stated the fact with as much of rebuke as he might think proper to use. I cannot believe that the Right Honourable Gentleman laid my letter of the 10th, and his answer of the 11th, before His Majesty, in order to cover the rebuke, which this answer contained, with His Majesty's sacred name and protection. I say it unfeignedly, that I believe the Right Honourable Gentleman is as incapable of doing so, as I believe I am myself. My Lords, the conclusion is obvious; the step of laying these letters before His Majesty must have been taken, because in fact the Right Honourable Gentleman was not His Majesty's Minister at the moment he received my question; as appears indeed quite clearly from his own statement in another place.

“ Upon the whole, then, I considered, when I received that letter of the 11th, that my situation, in relation both to His Majesty and the Right Honourable Gentleman, was so altered, as that, not thinking it proper, for the reason stated in my letter of the 11th, to remain in the Cabinet, I did not think I could continue in command of the Army with advantage to His Majesty's service. If I was hasty in coming to this decision, or the decision was founded in error, I ought to have been informed. I had always been on the best terms of good will and confidence with all my Colleagues; and I believe there was nobody who enjoyed more of the confidence, even of the Right Honourable Gentleman himself, than I did. I would appeal to the noble Lords (the Ministers present), whether I ever made difficulties, or ever acted otherwise than with a view to accommodate differences of opinion. Then, my Lords, if I took a hasty or intemperate view of this case, I ask them why they did not come forward

and render me the service, which I had more than once rendered to others, by representing to me that I was wrong?

“ Such a step has never been taken by them, and the reason is obvious ; it did not suit the Right Honourable Gentleman’s views that I should remain in the command of the Army, unless I should belong to his Cabinet. I beg pardon for troubling Your Lordships at such length upon a question personal to myself ; and I return my best thanks for the attention with which you have listened to what I have had occasion to address to you.”

“ Downing Street, May 3. 1827.

“ My dear Duke of WELLINGTON,

“ I HAVE read the report of Your Grace’s speech in the House of Lords, from which I learn, in confirmation of rumours (hitherto incredible to me) that your resignation is attributed by you, in part at least, to the letters which I addressed to Your Grace on the 10th and 11th of last month.

“ As I am sure that the misrepresentations with which the statements recorded in the newspaper abound must have been involuntary, I offer to Your Grace some explanations upon them, without any apprehension that the motives of my doing so should be mistaken.

“ In the first place, you are made to say, ‘ I was not desired by the Right Honourable Gentleman to come, nor was I referred to any body for explanation. To me the Right Honourable Gentleman neither came nor sent : but I have since heard that *explanations were given to others of our Colleagues*. The Right Honourable Gentleman either invited all to call upon *him*, or else he waited upon *them*, or sent a friend.’

“ Now this is entirely an error.

“ I received the King’s commands to form an Administration so late in the afternoon of Tuesday the 10th, that (the day fixed for the Adjournment of Parliament being Thursday the 12th) I had not an instant to lose in proceeding to the execution of those commands.

“ Lord Grenville, Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. Planta happening to be at my office when I returned from the King, I requested Lord Grenville to convey to Lord Harrowby, — Mr. Huskisson to Lord Melville and Mr. Wynn, — and Mr. Planta to Mr. Robinson, verbally, the same announcement which I addressed, at the same time, in writing, to Lord Bathurst, to Lord Westmoreland, to Lord Bexley, and to Your Grace.

“ I wrote also to the Lord Chancellor to ask leave to call upon His Lordship in the evening; and I wrote to Mr. Peel to ask him to call here, but subsequently (Mr. Peel being at the House of Commons when my first letter was sent to him) I offered to call upon him, on my return from the Lord Chancellor, which I did.

“ The difference of these modes of communication with my several Colleagues was dictated, as Your Grace will see, only by the necessity of the case.

“ To write to all, I had not time: to call upon all, was physically impossible. To have invited all to call upon me, would have been to consume in Conferences the whole of the only day intervening before my report to the King must be made. My Communication to all was in substance the same, except that my letter to Your Grace, was (as I thought) more pressing than to any other Person.

“ What Your Grace means by explanations given to others, and ‘not to you,’ I really cannot comprehend. I had already stated to Your Grace, in the fullest detail, all that passed at my audience with the King at Windsor. I had absolutely nothing more to tell, with the

exception of the simple fact, announced to Your Grace in my letter of the 10th, that 'the King had directed me to lay before His Majesty, with as little loss of time as possible, a plan of arrangements for the Reconstruction of the Administration.'

" Fault is found by Your Grace with the style or tone of my letters of the 10th and 11th.

" I have looked them over and over again in search of the supposed objectionable passages, but I confess I cannot discover any such. The address 'My dear Duke of Wellington' is precisely the same, as has been uniformly employed in our private Correspondence; and if some more formal words are introduced at the conclusion, it should be remembered that the letter was, in a certain degree, of an official character; and one, the copy of which was to be submitted to the King. I recollect perfectly well, that I doubted for a moment, whether I should introduce those slight formalities or not; — a doubt which, it appears, I decided unluckily, but certainly with no intention of offending.

" My letter of the 11th I submitted to His Majesty before I sent it; simply because when a doubt had been expressed in any quarter (more especially in one so important) as to my position with respect to His Majesty, it became necessary for me to have His Majesty's authority to confirm my description of it.

" Of Your Grace's answer to my letter of the 10th I will not permit myself to speak. I am willing that the World shall judge of it.

" The question, whether the Individual employed to form an Administration is '*usually*' placed at the Head of it, is one, upon which, till the receipt of that letter of Your Grace's, I did not suspect a difference of opinion to exist.

" Your Grace, indeed, is made to say, in justification

of your doubt upon the subject, that 'when, upon the death of Mr. Perceval, Lord Liverpool waited upon Mr. Canning to propose to him to become a Member of the Administration then about to be formed, the first question put to the noble Lord by Mr. Canning, was — Who is to be the First Lord of the Treasury ?'

"With Your Grace's leave, this is not the question that I put, nor is it so stated in the printed record from which you draw your information.

"I beg Your Grace to turn again to that Record, where you will find the passage to run thus: 'In answer to a *question* put by me, Lord Liverpool stated, that his *Colleagues* ~~were~~ *were desirous* that he should be appointed to the office of First Lord of the Treasury.' Now the question, to which this was an answer, was *not* 'Who is to be First Lord of the Treasury?' but, 'Are you what you are by election of your Colleagues?' I had heard a rumour to that effect, which I took this occasion of verifying. Your Grace has, on a recent occasion, agreed with me and with Mr. Peel in objecting to such a mode of constituting a First Minister.

"Your Grace states further that Lord Wellesley and Lord Moira successively conducted in 1812 negotiations for the formation of a Government, without having previously accepted office. This may be true of Lord Wellesley — of Lord Moira I speak with less certainty; but Your Grace must recollect, that both these negotiations failed. And my opinion was at the time, and has always since been, that they failed mainly because Lord Wellesley and Lord Moira did not in the outset ascertain, and assert their own precise situation as Ministers. Your Grace will see, then, that the transactions of 1812 were full in my mind; but that I considered them not as precedents, but as warnings.

"There are two very different versions of what Your

Grace said about Mr. Robinson's possible appointment to be First Lord of the Treasury. In one (the New Times) Your Grace is made to say, 'I had a conversation with Mr. Canning in which he stated that one of the plans submitted by him to His Majesty's consideration was to call the then Chancellor of the Exchequer to the House of Lords, conferring upon him the office of First Lord of the Treasury, and this Mr. Canning stated as one of the modes of keeping men together; but I had no difficulty in expressing my entire persuasion, that no scheme could be devised less calculated to produce the effect contemplated, viz. that of keeping a Government together.'

" In the other (the old Times) Your Grace is reported to have said, ' I had a conversation with Mr. Canning, in which he stated to me, that in case His Majesty should desire him to re-construct the Government, one of his plans was to recommend that Mr. Robinson, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, should be called up to Your Lordships' House, and should be made First Lord of the Treasury; and I confess to Your Lordships, that it was my intention, if I had heard any thing more of that scheme, to have proposed such a modification of it as would have kept the Members of the old Administration together.'

" If the latter version be the correct one, and if the sort of 'modification' which Your Grace would have proposed, was the substitution for Mr. Robinson of a Peer holding Your Grace's opinions on the Catholick Question, the proposition would have resolved itself into one, which I had from the beginning and invariably rejected.

" I do not believe, therefore, that any good could have arisen from a discussion with Your Grace on the subject of that particular arrangement.

“ Your Grace evidently was determined to insist upon the superinduction of an Anti-Catholick First Minister over my head, on the principle, which, if it was not (as Your Grace does me the honour to say repeatedly it was not) one of personal objection to me, could be no other than this, that an Individual holding *my* opinion upon the Catholick Question was *ipso facto* disqualified from occupying that Post.

“ I, on the other hand, was determined, as Your Grace from the beginning perfectly well knew, to quit the Government rather than submit to the degradation of exhibiting in my person, the exemplification of that principle of proscription.

“ We had long understood each other, distinctly, on this main point, and there could be no use in discussing it, unless Your Grace was prepared to waive your objection.

“ But a Head of the Government is not always necessarily ‘ First Lord of the Treasury.’

“ In the reign of George the First, Lord Townshend as Secretary of State was *the* Minister; while Sir Robert Walpole, though uniting the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, acted under him. In the seven years’ war, Mr. Pitt is generally supposed to have been *the* Minister, while the Duke of Newcastle was at the Head of the Treasury (but I think this instance doubtful). In the year 1766 Lord Chatham unquestionably formed an Administration, in which he took to himself the comparatively unimportant Post of Privy Seal, and was, in that Post, *the* Minister, putting the Duke of Grafton at the Head of the Treasury.

“ Now it was His Majesty’s especial desire that I should retain the Seals of the Foreign Department, uniting with that Department the attributes of First

Minister. And the instance of Mr. Pitt during the seven years' war was particularly pressed upon me as showing such an arrangement to be practicable.

" If practicable, I had not the slightest objection to it. I liked my then office a thousand times better than any other; and I had no ambition for the Title of First Lord of the Treasury, provided there were no misapprehension as to WHERE the chief power of the Government was to reside.

" It was on these grounds, that I stated to Your Grace in our conversation of the — of April, my willingness to remain where I was; Mr. Robinson going to the House of Lords with the DEPARTMENT of First Lord of the Treasury.

" I presently found, however, that it would be impracticable to make this arrangement, without incurring one or other of two inconveniences; either the new First Lord of the Treasury would have been considered as in effect First Minister; — or he might have been induced to think himself degraded by the abstraction of the attributes most usually attached (in latter times) to that office.

" This second inconvenience I should deeply have lamented, — the former was the very one, the avoiding of which I had declared from the beginning to be a *sine qua non* condition of my acquiescence in any arrangement.

" The only advice which I tendered to His Majesty, was, to form an exclusively Anti-Catholick Administration, — not certainly from an abstract partiality to such an Administration, but because I thought it of the utmost importance to His Majesty's ease and comfort that His Majesty should clearly ascertain, whether they who advised His Majesty to proscribe a Minister favourable

to the Catholick Claims, would undertake to form a Government in their own sense.

“ I knew not what had been the advice of His Majesty’s other Counsellors upon this point, nor what was His Majesty’s final decision upon it, till I went into the closet on the 10th of April.

“ There is but one other part of Your Grace’s speech which appears to call for any observations from me.

“ Your Grace emphatically says that *your* being at the Head of the Government was ‘wholly out of the question.’

“ I learned this opinion of Your Grace with sincere pleasure.

“ The union of ~~the~~ whole power in the state, civil and military, in the same hands, (for Your Grace, as Prime Minister, could never have effectually divested yourself of your influence over the Army,) would certainly, in my opinion, have constituted a station too great for *any subject*, however eminent, or however meritorious, and one incompatible with the practice of a free Constitution. Nothing would have induced me to serve under such a form of Government, and I am rejoiced to find that Your Grace’s opinion was always against such an arrangement.

“ But I confess I am surprised that, such being Your Grace’s fixed opinion, it should nevertheless have been proposed to me, as it was more than once, and up to the 9th of April inclusive, to concur in placing Your Grace at the head of the Government. There is in this apparent contradiction a mystery which I cannot explain.

“ In rejecting, however, as I did, that proposition, I do assure Your Grace I was not actuated by any feeling unfriendly or disrespectful to Your Grace: nor am I conscious of any such feeling now.

“ I take nothing personally amiss in Your Grace’s

speech. I retain a recollection, corresponding with your own, of the intercourse which has for some years subsisted between us on Political Affairs; and there is not in the Nation, or in the Army itself, an individual who regrets more deeply than I do, that Your Grace should have thought it necessary to withdraw from the Command of the Army ~~at~~ the same time that you resigned your Seat in the Cabinet.

“ Believe me,

“ My dear Duke of WELLINGTON,

“ Ever very sincerely yours,

“ (Signed)      GEO. CANNING.

“ P. S.— I must request you to excuse me for having employed another hand in this letter.— I kept the Draft of it by me twenty-four hours, in the hope of finding time to transcribe it myself, but it has really been out of my power to do so.”

“ *London, May 6. 1827.*

“ My dear Mr. CANNING,

“ As you told me yesterday at the Royal Academy that you had written to me in order to avoid further discussion in Parliament upon the subject of my resignation (which I regret that I was ever under the necessity of discussing in Parliament), I willingly proceed to state to you the general purport of what I said in the House of Lords, on the points referred to by you.

“ I am very much surprised that you should not have known till after that discussion, and you should have doubted the truth of the rumours, which stated that my Resignation was attributed by me to the letters which you had written to me on the 10th and 11th of last month. I conclude that you advised His Majesty’s answer of the 13th to my Letter of the 12th of April;

and, at all events, you must have seen the letter in which I expressed the grief and pain that I felt in requesting His Majesty to excuse me from attendance in His Councils; and in consequence thereof, and *adverting to the tenour of the letters*, which I had received from His Majesty's Minister by His Majesty's command, in asking His Majesty's permission to ~~lay~~ at His feet those offices which connected me with His Government.

“ I have not read the Newspapers, and I do not know whether they have accurately reported what I said in the House of Lords.

“ I did say that in your letter to me of the 10th of April, there were ~~two~~ important omissions; the first, Who were to be my Colleagues? — the second, Who was to be the Head of the Government? — This is fact, as you will see on reference to your Letter. I did likewise say, that I was not invited to receive further explanations, as Lord Westmoreland (to whom, by-the-by, your letter contained the explanation that his Colleagues were to be in the Cabinet with him, which was omitted in that to myself,) and Lord Bathurst were; nor referred to any body for explanation, as Lord Melville and Lord Harrowby were, and, as it now appears, Mr. Wynn and Mr. Robinson were; and in the House of Lords I also said, that to some you went yourself, as, for instance, to the Chancellor and to Mr. Peel.

“ But I admitted in the House of Lords, as I do now, that although I was struck by the omissions in the letter of the 10th instant addressed to myself when I wrote to you on that night, and although I thought it but a very cold invitation to belong to the Cabinet, yet I was not aware till afterwards of the different mode of communication adopted towards others.

“ I have only further to observe upon the mode of concluding your letter to me, which you admit was not

the usual one, and which new mode you doubted whether to introduce or not, that in the letters addressed to Lord Bathurst and to Lord Westmoreland, which I presume were, equally with those addressed to me, to be laid before the King, you did not think it necessary to introduce such or other formalities.

“ I said in the House of Lords, and I here repeat, that the question in my letter of the 10th of April, was asked for the purpose of obtaining the information, which yours of the 10th did not convey; and that my conversation with you on the 2d, had given me reason to believe that you had in contemplation another arrangement (viz. that Mr. Robinson should be called to the House of Lords and be made First Lord of the Treasury), in case the King should have proposed to you to lay before His Majesty a plan for the reconstruction of the Administration.

“ Had you stated in answer to my question, as you might have done, that you still had that arrangement in contemplation, I would have taken the liberty of suggesting to you some other arrangement, better calculated, as I thought, to keep the Government together.

“ I likewise said in the House of Lords, that I did not think the practice, as stated by you in your letter of the 11th, was so general as to induce me to assign a meaning to the words of your letter of the 10th, which, in my opinion, they did not convey, more particularly when taking into consideration what you had yourself said to me respecting your Plans.

“ In relation to the practice, I referred to the Record of the transactions of 1812, from which it appears clearly that there were two instances of Persons of high Rank and Station and Reputation employed by His present Majesty, to make arrangements for forming a Ministry; and that these Persons themselves stated that

it was not settled that they were to be the Head of such Administrations.

“ It does not signify, in my view of the case, whether the want of success of these Persons was to be attributed to that fact or not.

“ I might have quoted another instance, that of the formation of the last Ministry under the Duke of Portland, of which I was perfectly aware when I wrote to you on the 10th of April, and of course when I addressed the House of Lords.

“ I was not in England in 1812, and knew nothing of the transactions of that period excepting what is in the Record above referred to; and I confess that I believed that your question to Lord Liverpool was asked, as mine certainly was to you, for the purpose of obtaining Information as to who was the Person to be the Head of the Government, and not in what mode he came to be placed in that situation. I must add, that I was confirmed in that impression by the perusal of the speech which you made in the House of Commons in May 1812, in which you declared your reasons for declining to become a Member of the Administration. Your objection was not to the manner in which Lord Liverpool had been appointed to be the Head of the Government, but merely that a Person differing from you on the Roman Catholick Question was to exercise the influence of the Government.

“ I did not state in the House of Lords, nor is it necessary that I should now state, what was the suggestion which I intended to make to you, in case you had answered my letter of the 10th, as I expected you would, viz. that you still thought of Mr. Robinson.

“ I am one of those who think it desirable that the King, in forming His Ministry, should select a Person for its Head of the same general opinions with himself

upon the great questions of Policy, whether Foreign or Domestick; and particularly in a case likely to come frequently under discussion, on which the opinions of the Empire are so divided as to render it improbable to form an efficient Ministry composed exclusively of Persons of either opinion.

“ I judged, from the Conversation which I had with His Majesty at Windsor, that His Majesty did consider it important that the Administration should be composed of Persons of both opinions upon the Roman Catholick Question; and that the Head of the Government should be of the same opinion with His Majesty; and that it was essential that He should continue to enjoy the benefit of your services.

“ But I do not know where you found the evidence that I was determined not to act under any Person as First Minister, who did not entertain Anti-Catholick opinions. Neither have I learned where or when I was to know perfectly well, that you were determined to quit the Government rather than submit to what you term the degradation of exhibiting in your Person the exemplification of that principle of supposed Proscription.

“ I never had but one Conversation with you upon the subject of the Government, and that was on the 2d of April. In that Conversation, although we discussed the principle of exclusion from office on the score of Catholick opinions, it was not in reference to your own alleged right to be First Minister. Indeed, this was so much the case, that I perfectly recollect stating to you that the conclusion to which I understood we had come, was, that the arrangement must include Persons of both opinions, and no more; and that I should state that to be the conclusion, as I did in fact so state it, to Mr. Peel.

“ Although, however, I did not know that you claimed to be First Minister as a *sine quâ non*, I was very sen-

sible that to succeed to this Post was a reasonable object of ambition to you. It never occurred to me that any man could have a right to insist on this Post as a *sine qua non*; and I thought it not impossible, that when you should come to consider the inconvenience to yourself, as well as to the Publick Interests, of your being the First Minister, taking into account the History of your opinions and conduct and speeches upon the Roman Catholick Question even to the last, and contrasting in your mind such opinions of yours with those of the King, you might have consented to act in a Government which was avowedly to be formed upon the Principles of Lord Liverpool's Administration, in the same relation to the Government in which you had stood, when Lord Liverpool was its head.

“ I was mistaken in these expectations; but there was certainly nothing in them disrespectful or unfriendly towards you.

“ I never recommended to the King to form an Administration composed exclusively of persons entertaining the opinion that no further concessions ought to be made to the Roman Catholicks—I should have declined to serve His Majesty in His Councils as one of such an Administration; because I am convinced that such an Administration would be, under existing circumstances, too weak to carry on the Government. The attempt, therefore, to form such an exclusive Administration, would, in my opinion, be the greatest misfortune that could happen to His Majesty and the Publick; and I must add, that His Majesty's honour and welfare, and that of the State, are the circumstances which, I think, ought, on this subject, to be considered principally and in priority to the claims and pretensions of any individuals.

“ It is not necessary that I should enter into the discussion whether, as the Head of the Government,

you ought to be First Lord of the Treasury. In modern times so much Power has been given to the Treasury over the expenditure of other Departments of the Government, and it is so necessary now for the Treasury to exercise that Power, and it would be so inconvenient to have that Power exercised by a subordinate Minister, that I believe you will find it to be most embarrassing, if not impossible, for the First Minister to hold any other Office.

" In respect to myself, I did say in the House of Lords, that I had always considered myself out of the question, as His Majesty also had, when speaking to me of the arrangements to be made for filling the Office vacated by the affliction visited upon us all in the person of Lord Liverpool. Considering myself out of the question, on account of the painful professional sacrifices which I should have to make in relinquishing the Office of Commander in Chief, and still more on account of the want of Personal qualification necessary, in my opinion, to enable any man to perform the duties of the Head of the Government to the advantage of His Majesty and to his own honour, it is not necessary that I should discuss whether a High Military Reputation is or is not a disqualification for Office.

" Whatever others may have thought or said about me, and whatever may have been the proposition, and whenever made to you, it was not made in concert with me, and still less at my suggestion.

" There remains only one topick in your Letter to which I have not adverted, and it relates to my resignation of the Command of the Army.

" I considered your letters to me, and most particularly the one of the 11th of April, in which, be it observed, you state, that you had previously submitted it to His Majesty, to have placed me in such a relation towards His Majesty, and towards yourself as His First

Minister, ~~was~~ to render it impossible for me to continue my Office of Commander in Chief.

" I could not be otherwise than in constant Confidential Relations with His Majesty on the one hand, and with yourself on the other, as you will find by and by, when you shall come to conduct the duties of the Office of First Lord of the Treasury; and it was impossible for me to look for that personal good-will and confidence in such communications, which are absolutely necessary, and which I trust I deserve, after I had received from you a Letter in which I thought you had made use of a tone of rebuke not provoked by any thing contained in my letter to you, and for which the sanction of His Majesty was, as I think, very unnecessarily obtained.

" I know what I owe to His Majesty, but I should be unworthy of his favour and kindness, and quite useless to him hereafter, if I had continued to endeavour to serve him in the Post of Commander in Chief of his Army after I had received that letter.

" I am not in the habit of deciding upon such matters hastily or in anger; and the proof of this is, that I never had a quarrel with any man in my life.

" If I could have entertained a doubt upon the subject of your letters to me, and the course which I ought to have pursued in consequence of them, the letter which I received from His Majesty of the 18th of April, written I conclude by your advice as His Minister, must have confirmed the impression which the preceding communications had made.

" Ever, my dear Mr. CANNING,

" Yours, most sincerely,

" (Signed) WELLINGTON.

" I commenced to write this letter last night, ~~but~~ have only now been able to finish it.

" May 7. 2, P. M."

Upon a full and impartial examination of the whole of the documents relating to this discussion, together with the commentary that the subsequent acts of the Duke of Wellington's Government has afforded to them, it cannot but be matter of surprise as well as of regret that the Duke of Wellington should have taken the important decision to relinquish his publick duty on such apparently erroneous and trivial causes of personal offence. For when it is considered that within two years of this period the Duke of Wellington himself, as head of the Government, persuaded the King to grant unqualified concession to the demands of the Catholicks, it is difficult to attribute His Grace's secession from the Government in 1827 to the influence of the only other motive assigned for it — viz. deference to His Majesty's opinions on the Catholick Question, and the impossibility of giving fair support and confidence to a Government at the head of which was an individual favourable to the Catholicks, from the conviction that the necessary result of the preponderating influence of a Government so constituted would inevitably bring the Country into a state of peril.

To this answer Mr. Canning made no reply; he feared that had he done so, the correspondence might have " degenerated into controversy," and that any rejoinder from him

might have placed the chance of a return to a mutual good understanding at a greater distance than ever, and thereby have continued to "de-  
" prive the Country of his Grace's Military  
" services."

Lord Bexley spoke next to the Duke of Wellington. He shortly observed, that he resigned from a "belief that the same latitude "would not be given to the members of the "new Cabinet, in respect of the Catholick "Question, which had been enjoyed by those "who constructed Lord Liverpool's Ministry; "but, on finding out his error, he hastened to "retrace the step into which incorrect intelli- "gence had betrayed him."

Lord Bathurst stated that his resignation was owing to that of many Colleagues in whose judgment he placed implicit reliance, and the consequent effect that their retirement would have upon the position of the Catholick Question. The noble Earl denied that there was any concert amongst those who withdrew, though he allowed that the simultaneous resignation of so many Cabinet Ministers was a "singular coincidence."

Lord Westmoreland denied concert, and observed that the state of the Catholick Question was the cause of his resignation.

Lord Melville asked "whether, when it was "proposed to an individual to form a part of an

“ administration, it was imperative upon him to  
 “ acquiesce in the proposition and to join that  
 “ administration, whatever opinion he might  
 “ have formed as to its *stability*, or character?  
 “ The answer to that question was the ground,”  
 he said, “ on which he stood.” His Lordship,  
 however, breathed not a syllable against the  
*character* of the Ministry from which he had  
 seceded.

Lord Londonderry opposed Mr. Canning, because he had departed from the political principles, and diplomatick relations of the late Lord Londonderry. And Lord Lansdowne, in a clear and straight-forward speech, vindicated his support of the Administration. Lord Anglesey said a few words in explanation of his conduct ; and Lord Winchelsea concluded the debate.

These debates in the House of Commons and the House of Lords were those only, which afforded any real insight into the causes of the breaking up of Lord Liverpool’s Administration.

## CHAP. XX.

DEBATES ON THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. — DEBATES ON THE SAME SUBJECT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS. — SPEECH OF THE EARL GREY. — THE BUDGET. — CORN BILL. — AMENDMENT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON. — ABANDONMENT OF THE BILL. — DEBATES RESPECTING IT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. — MR. CANNING'S ILLNESS, DEATH, AND FUNERAL.

THE debates, conversations, or discussions which took place on the subject of the new Administration in the two Houses of Parliament amounted altogether to the number of fourteen. The History of the first in both Houses has already been given. That of the remaining twelve remains to be told. Mr. Canning having been present at those which occurred in the House of Commons himself, took care to answer the attacks to which he thought it necessary to reply. But in the other House of Parliament, where he was not present, attacks were made

upon him, to which to this hour no answer has yet been given.

In some of these debates, the observations which were made degenerated into coarseness of abuse. Such observations it is not intended to notice ; for there is no advantage in snatching from oblivion the intemperate remarks of individuals, which were made in moments of excitement, which they themselves probably regret having made, and which in no way injured Mr. Canning's reputation.

Upon others, of a different description, some remarks must be offered.

In the House of Commons, the night following the first debate in the House of Lords, the debate originated with Mr. Dawson, who, in an irregular way, interrupted General Gascoyne in his speech upon the Shipping Interest, by stating that he had a question of considerable importance to put to the head of His Majesty's Government. At that moment, Mr. Canning was not in the House ; but while a few words were passing between Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Dawson, on the subject of his absence, he himself entered. Mr. Dawson then asked his question, which was, " whether any arrangement had " been made, or was in contemplation, for filling " up the offices of Master of the Mint, Judge " Advocate, and Surveyor General of the Woods " and Forests ?" To this question Mr. Canning

returned the laconick answer, “*Yes*,” an answer which was received with loud and reiterated cheering; and Mr. Dawson, professing his inability to understand what the cheering meant, proceeded “for the sake of enabling himself to “make some observations,” to move “that an “address should be presented to the King, “praying that copies of the Commissions of the “Master of the Mint and Judge Advocate “might be laid before the House.”

The only portion of the Honourable Member’s speech of any importance, is that in which he urged the necessity of the Catholick Question being immediately brought forward by the new Government, and its supporters.

Mr. Brougham rose to “second” the motion, and after having complimented Mr. Dawson upon the “unblushing openness of his factious conduct,” proceeded to expose the fallacy of the reasoning by which he had attempted to shew, that it was the bounden duty of the supporters of the Catholick claims, who had joined the Government, to bring forward immediately a motion in their favour. “*The Catholicks*,” said the learned Gentleman, “had too often, he was “afraid, taken a lesson of indiscretion from their “friends; let them now take a second lesson,— “a wiser one,— from the advice and tuition of “the Honourable Member for Derry (Mr. Dawson); for if the Catholicks could doubt now,

" for a moment, they must be mad — literally  
 " and absolutely mad, — that the especial course  
 " calculated to ruin their interests, was for them  
 " to follow the advice which that Honourable  
 " Gentleman and his friends threw out to them.  
 " Let the Catholicks, if they have feared their  
 " hostility, let them now on every account be  
 " apprehensive of their friendship. Let them  
 " trust to the effects of time, and of discussion,  
 " of better lights breaking out in various ways,  
 " and freer opinions, in England. Let them  
 " rely upon the effect of their own forbearance,  
 " of their abstinence from offensive and provok-  
 " ing topicks. Let them suspect bad advisers,  
 " and endeavour to conciliate the hostility of  
 " those, who opposed them from honest and sin-  
 " cere prejudices; let them avoid the counsels  
 " and seductions of rash and intemperate friends:  
 " but above all, let them fly from the advice of  
 " their open, avowed, and determined enemies,  
 " who were now endeavouring, in order to pro-  
 " mote their own private and party purposes, to  
 " force them on to a conduct, which could have  
 " no end but in their ruin."

In a subsequent part of his speech, Mr. Brougham pointed out the inconsistency of the  
 " very same individuals, who had held agitating  
 " the Catholick Question a fortnight back the  
 " very worst thing in the world, being then only  
 " anxious without a moment's delay to bring it

“ forward.” He then called the Government, “ if ever Government deserved the name, effective, generally consistent, able, honest, and enlightened ; denied the eagerness of the Whigs for place,” and described the scruples which they raised before they consented to join the Government “ as squeamish and uncalled for.” He then shewed how he had long approved of Mr. Canning’s principles of foreign policy ; and concluded by declaring his determination to give the Government a cordial, zealous, and disinterested support.

Mr. Canning then rose for the purpose, and he said not without the hope, of being able to persuade the House to place General Gascoyne in that priority to which by the invariable practice of the House he was entitled. He said that “ he must take leave to suggest to the Honourable Member, that proceedings so irregular brought with them generally their own cure, from the disgust which they never failed to excite. The trick was too bare ; priority was due to General Gascoyne, although the interpolated topics were perhaps more interesting ; but (he must remind the House) there were large interests at stake, upon the decision of the subject, fixed for discussion that evening, which ought not to be lightly risked, and which would not fairly admit of postponement.”

After Mr. Canning had sat down, Mr. Peel got up, avowedly for the purpose of supporting his attempt to bring back the House to the real business of the day; but instead of confining his speech to that object, he made a violent attack upon the new supporters of the Government, in which he certainly threw away all the moderation which he had professed on the first night of the meeting. He declared that he could "not place confidence in the present Government, until he had a full, satisfactory, and clear explanation of the principles of the coalition. That before he did so, he must know what was to be done with the questions of Parliamentary reform, and the repeal of the Test Act. And if," said he, "the Noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) should be prepared to move for any further concessions to the Protestant Dissenters, I give him notice that I intend to oppose him, and that I will *always* do so, whether in or out of power." He then with considerable asperity commented on the support given by those who had complained of a Government divided on the Catholick question, now giving their support to one which was so divided.

These attacks, on the Whig members of the Government and its Whig supporters, from Mr. Peel, might not have indicated any hostile feelings on his part towards his former Col-

leagues, if he had not complained “ of the “ first places in the state being allowed to con- “ tinue unfilled, like empty boxes waiting for “ those who had engaged them :” and if he had not asked “ why the Public Offices were filled “ with merely fugacious Ministers ? ” His speech, though not professedly hostile to the Government, certainly embraced every topick which was likely to be inconvenient to it. After some observations from Sir Francis Burdett and Sir Edward Knatchbull, Mr. Canning took the opportunity of declaring “ that the standard of Opposition “ was now openly raised—which was better than “ a continuance of hollow pretensions of unreal “ neutrality.” The House received this declaration in a manner which left no apprehension in the Government of the want of zealous supporters.

Mr. Canning likewise announced his unaltered opposition to Parliamentary Reform, as well as to the repeal of the Test Act.

On this last question it so happened that Mr. Canning had never before given an opinion, but having one, he did not hesitate to declare it. “ He thought,” he said, “ that the exertions of “ the Legislature ought to be directed to the “ redress of practical, not theoretical grievances ; “ and inasmuch as he thought any meddling with “ the Test Act might prejudice the Catholick “ Question, which was attended with real prac-

“ tical and pressing grievances, he would oppose “ the repeal.”

Mr. Dawson replied, and Sir George Warrender having said a few words, the debate ended.

Notwithstanding the sorry figure cut by these irregular assailers of the Ministry, on this occasion, Sir Thomas Lethbridge renewed the attack on the following evening, by opposing a motion for the postponement of the committee of supply.

Mr. W. Peel (a brother of the ex-minister) made also a strong speech against the Government and its head.

The third debate took place on the 7th of May, and was begun by Sir Henry Hardinge, on the presentation of a Petition in favour of the Roman Catholick claims by Lord Belgrave, a few minutes after Mr. M. Fitzgerald had withdrawn his notice of a motion which stood for the following day, and which recommended “ that “ the House of Commons should take such course “ as might be best calculated to realize the “ policy in which the Union of Great Britain “ and Ireland was recommended to the Legisla- “ tures of both Countries.”

In the course of this debate Mr. Maberly expressed his hopes that a Finance Committee would be appointed next Session : on which Mr. Canning announced it to be his intention to propose one. He then briefly informed the House what

were his financial intentions, and that he intended on the following Friday to proceed with the Votes in the Committee of Supply, which he said would be “the legitimate opportunity for “all those who had made up their minds to “evince their loyalty to their King, and their “anxiety for the interests of their Country, to “proceed with their opposition by opposing the “supplies.” He concluded by reminding the House that this was the night fixed for General Gascoyne’s motion on the shipping interests; and that while there were so many persons waiting at its door for the discussion, it would be unseemly again to postpone it, by continuing such an irregular conversation. After a few words from Lord Milton the conversation dropped; the violence displayed in which was, however, of a very mitigated character, compared with that which marked similar conversations in the preceding week.

The fourth debate was begun by Sir Thomas Lethbridge, who rose professedly to ask two questions; 1st, “Whether the office of Secretary of State for the Foreign Department was held “temporarily and provisionally?” 2dly, “Whether there had or had not been a treaty in existence during the existence of the late Ministry between the Right Honourable Gentleman and those who were called the leaders of the Whigs for their coming into office, or support-

“ ing the Government of the Right Honourable  
 “ Gentleman whereon he might be able to  
 “ compose one?”

Mr. Canning answered the first of these questions by saying, that “neither courtesy nor taunts should extract from him one single syllable on the subject of the changes of the Government, till Mr. Beaumont brought forward his motion upon the subject.”

Mr. Canning’s answer to the other question, about a treaty with the Whigs, was as follows: “ The Honourable Baronet’s second question, which is much the most important one, is to this effect, ‘Did any negotiation exist between those Honourable Members by whose support I am honoured, and myself, for their coming into office, at, during, or about the time of the dissolution of the old Government?’ Though the Honourable Baronet\* has such an aversion to monosyllables, though ‘yes’ offended him the other day, I hope he will now take ‘no’ as a satisfactory and inoffensive answer. I should not do justice to others, however, if I omitted to say, that I did know that in the event of my being placed at the head of the Government, I should have an accession of strength, not by the general admission of a large party to

\* Sir Thomas had complained of this answer of Mr. Canning.

“ office, but by the disinterested support of  
“ some individuals of that party. On their  
“ part it was directly contrary to a bargain for  
“ office. I received, unsought, a communication  
“ which assured me that there were some in-  
“ dividuals,—few in number, but very important  
“ by their weight and character,—who were  
“ disposed to render me cordial, but expressly  
“ disinterested support. I should do them an  
“ act of unpardonable injustice, if I concealed  
“ the fact, that when I was driven to straits in  
“ the formation of a Government, and when the  
“ question arose as to their introduction to  
“ Office, it originated with me, and not with  
“ them.”

The discussion was continued at some length, but the tone of the opposition was greatly moderated.

The fifth and sixth debates were also much less violent. Mr. Canning, in describing them, said “ nothing of any immediate interest passed except some observations of Sir Thomas Lethbridge, of which I hoped that I should have succeeded in preventing the repetition, by declaring that I would not answer a single question relative to the late transactions unless it were brought forward as a motion. I was however disappointed, for on the 21st of May the business of the House was again impeded for an hour or more, by a conversation arising

“ out of one of Sir Thomas Lethbridge’s usual  
 “ speeches ; in which conversation Lord Castle-  
 “ reagh and Colonel Lindsay declared their re-  
 “ spective oppositions to the Government, (the  
 “ former because it was too Protestant, the latter  
 “ because it was too Catholick,) and Mr. Curwen,  
 “ Sir Robert Williams, Lord Sandon, and Mr.  
 “ Grattan spoke in its defence.”

These were the last debates in the House of Commons on the subject, for Mr. Beaumont abandoned his promised motion.

The debates in the House of Lords bore a very striking resemblance to those which took place in the House of Commons, at least as far as related to violence of language.

The second discussion in the Upper House took place the day after Mr. Dawson’s irregular motion in the House of Commons. It was begun by Lord Winchelsea, who rose to enquire, whether the members of the late opposition, who then sat on the ministerial side of the House, intended to bring forward any motion on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, the Repeal of the Test Act, and the Abolition of Sinecure Places. If it were not their intention to do so, he said that he should bring forward a motion on the 11th of June on the state of the nation.

Lord Londonderry followed, and spoke of the “ pain ” which a retrospective view of the state of the country occasioned him. Lord Goderich

refused to discuss incidentally, by detail, any subject which might be introduced, and said that he should reserve himself for Lord Winchelsea's motion. Lord Harrowby, in explanation of his conduct, said a few words, which were manly, statesman-like, and patriotick. Throughout these transactions he had acted with the most perfect consistency, honour, and generosity. Lord Winchelsea then withdrew his notice, saying that on the Monday following he would fix the day for his motion, on the state of the Nation.

The third debate consisted of a speech from Lord Londonderry, and a short reply from Lord Dudley.

The fourth debate was commenced by the Duke of Newcastle, in presenting a Petition against any alteration in the Corn Laws. His Grace indulged in a strain of virulent abuse against the head of the Government, but since his assertions were unsupported by either argument or evidence, they come under the description of those which, according to the great Lord Chat-  
ham, affect only the character of him who utters them."

Another noble Lord having presented a petition against the Corn Bill, the Earl of Darlington expressed his surprize and astonishment at the course which had been taken by noble Lords upon the opposite benches. He regretted deeply

to see their sudden and violent opposition, which he thought must have arisen from one of two causes, either a desire to return to place, or a wish to dictate to their Sovereign in the appointment of a Minister. He said that he had but little personal knowledge of the Right Honourable Gentleman at the head of the Government; but he was on the Ministerial side of the House, because he looked upon Mr. Canning as a friend to civil and religious liberty, and that his conduct when Foreign Secretary was such that he (Lord Darlington) thought that he had “proved “ himself a consummate Statesman, and one “ admirably calculated to direct our foreign and “ domestick policy.”

Several noble Lords spoke against the Government; and Lord Spencer explained the grounds of his support of it, which were essentially the same as those already given by other Members of the party to which the noble Earl belonged.

The Earl Grey then rose, and in reply to the observations of Lord Darlington took advantage of the occasion “ to explain the differences of “ opinion that had separated him from those “ noble friends, with whom he had acted “ throughout the whole of his political life.” This distinguished nobleman was not amongst those members of his party who had joined Mr. Canning: and their junction with that Minister

did not prevent him either from “ withholding “ his confidence ” from the Administration, or from co-operating, if not by compact, at any rate, in effect with the Ultra Tory party. Finding himself in this position, it is not surprising that he felt the necessity of explaining his conduct ; and as since the ~~construction~~ of the Cabinet no new measures had been proposed, therefore there were none which could be condemned, personal objections to some of its constituent members on the score of former policy was the only mode of justification which remained to him. Accordingly it will be seen that he ascribed his want of confidence in the Government to his disapprobation of the previous conduct of its head.

The high character, which for many reasons Lord Grey deservedly bears, has given to this speech an importance which less eminent members of the Legislature attempted in vain to confer on their attacks on Mr. Canning, by the employment of more violent and unseemly language. Such intemperate ebullitions have been passed over as unworthy of notice ; but Lord Grey’s arguments having been urged with that ingenious sophistry, which makes “ the worse “ appear the better reason,” and with all the adventitious aids of eloquence and rhetorick, to move the passions and mislead judgement, it would be impossible to allow them to pass wholly

unnoticed, even if Lord Grey had not after a lapse of more than four years repeated one of the principal charges against Mr. Canning's policy.

Strange as it may appear, the speech has to this day remained unanswered. The reasons which prevented any of Mr. Canning's noble friends from replying to it need not now be discussed; but it is a fact that Mr. Canning, finding that it had been left unnoticed in the House of Lords, had at one time resolved to notice it in the House of Commons. He was, however, induced to abandon this resolution in the anticipation that at no very distant period the opportunity would offer of replying *in person* to Lord Grey, as well as on account of the state of his health, which at that time rendered him very unfit for the exertion.

The first part of Lord Grey's speech related to his own position towards the different parties in the House of Lords. On this head Lord Grey must, of course, be allowed to be the best judge. The second related to the Catholick Question; but since all Lord Grey's observations on that subject have been so conclusively answered by Mr. Canning himself in another place, it is unnecessary here to advert to them. It was the third part which related to our Foreign Policy in which all the bitterness of the attack was concentrated. The argument by which this attack was attempted to be vindicated we shall

now proceed to examine. Lord Grey began this part of his speech by saying, "There is another question to which allusion has been made by my noble friend\*; I mean, the Foreign relations of the Country; and here, I must observe, that I know not how it has happened, that a sort of contrast has been held up before the public, between the conduct of the Right Honourable Gentleman, now at the head of His Majesty's Government, and that of the individuals with whom he was so recently associated — his former colleagues in the Administration. On this subject, I must declare that it will be necessary for me to know, that the salutary measures, referring to this subject, were carried by the Right Honourable Gentleman not only without the assistance, but in spite of the efforts, of those individuals, before I can consent to allow him the exclusive merit belonging to them. I am sure that he has not himself led to the holding up of this contrast: I am sure that it has been owing to the indiscretion of his friends; for if I could believe him guilty of such conduct, that would be indeed one great reason, why I should refuse him my support and withhold from him my confidence."

"Exclusive merit" for carrying these salutary measures was never claimed by Mr. Canning. On the contrary, he was foremost on all

Lord Darlington.

occasions to declare that he received from Lord Liverpool the most cordial and never failing assistance. That there were others of his former colleagues who “thwarted him in the development of his system of Foreign policy,” is undoubtedly. While the change in the system of our Foreign policy which Lord Grey has since admitted \* took place after Mr. Canning had become responsible for its management, not only accounts for the “exclusive merit” which publick opinion and not the “indiscretion of friends” ascribed to him, but likewise explains “how it happened that a sort of contrast had been held up” between Mr. Canning and his former colleagues.” On this point indeed Lord Grey did not prefer any direct accusation. He was contented just “to hint a fault and hesitate dislike,” and whilst acknowledging that Mr. Canning was blameless, to run the chance of creating a prejudice against him by coupling the fact with his name.

This generous mode of acting towards a political opponent, is however fairness itself in comparison with the two following accusations.

1. That, for the sake “only of some beneficial commercial intercourse with Spanish America, Mr. Canning was ready to set aside every feeling of national right and national independence.”

\* Vide *Mirror of Parliament*, August 9. 1831.

2. That Mr. Canning had made, in the House of Commons, "an idle and an empty boast."

To the first of these charges a character of peculiar candour was apparently given, by its being made to depend on that which Lord Grey said he "found" in "the speech published by" Mr. Canning on the occasion of sending troops to Portugal: when, therefore, to support this, he asserted that he "found" from that document that Mr. Canning had "connived at the "invasion of Spain by France," the assertion was implicitly credited by the unsuspecting auditor, who never imagined the real truth to be, that this identical charge of connivance was indeed mentioned in that speech by Mr. Canning, but was only mentioned by him in order that he might deny it. "When the French "Army was on the point of entering Spain, His "Majesty's Government did *all in their power* "to prevent it. *We resisted it* by all means "short of war," was his positive denial, when accused of "having allowed France to usurp "the occupation of Spain." This fancied discovery might be here dismissed, were it not that there were two quotations subsequently made by Lord Grey, which, although not introduced with reference to this point, are nevertheless so materially altered as to be made, as it were incidentally, to prove, the first — that Mr. Canning did admit in his speech, that he had "connived

“ at the invasion ; ” the second — that he did “ connive at it,” whether he there acknowledged it or not.

By a reference to Lord Grey’s speech, the reader will find that Mr. Canning’s words are thus quoted : — “ If *I allowed* France to occupy “ Spain, was it necessary that we should block- “ ade Cadiz ? ” in which sentence it is obvious that the expression “ *I allowed*,” if really used, might be said to constitute that admission of deliberate connivance which Lord Grey affirmed that he had discovered. These words, however, are not Mr. Canning’s : not only they cannot be “ found” in the “ published Speech” (to which Lord Grey professed to confine himself), but they are not to be found even in any uncorrected version of it, nor indeed any terms which can by possibility bear a similar signification.

The quotation was still further amplified in a subsequent paraphrase, where Lord Grey asserted that Mr. Canning was “ *the man* ” who had “ observed that he had allowed France ~~qui-~~ “ ~~ETLY~~ to occupy the Spanish Territories,” an aggravation of the meaning, which is not even justified by the insertion.

It is, indeed, not a little remarkable that Lord Grey should select this sentence as a text on which to found all his accusations and his vituperative remarks, and should call the attention of the House to it in so marked a manner, when he

had bestowed on it so small a portion of his own attention, as to be unable to quote it with correctness. To prove this assertion, Lord Grey's version and the true one are put in juxtaposition with each other.

**Lord GREY'S QUOTATION.    Mr. CANNING'S SPEECH.**

“If,” says he, “I allowed France to occupy Spain, was it necessary that we should blockade Cadiz? I say no: I looked another way for compensation, I looked to another hemisphere; and if France occupied Spain, I resolved that it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old.”

“If France occupied Spain, was it necessary in order to avoid the consequence of that occupation that we should blockade Cadiz? No, I looked another way. I sought materials of compensation in another Hemisphere: contemplating Spain such as our Ancestors had known her. I resolved that if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old.”

By comparing these two versions together, it will be seen that in Lord Grey's not only the important words “I allowed” are inserted, but there are likewise numerous omissions.

The second misquotation is where Lord Grey affirmed that Mr. Canning had made “a declaration to the Government of France, ‘that, ‘come what would, England would not inter-

“ ‘ fere with the invasion of Spain :’ ” in which, by changing the phrase “ NO PARTY,” into, “ NOT INTERFERE,” Mr. Canning is made to declare that England would maintain a rigid neutrality in case of a war between France and Spain ; when, in point of fact, all that he avowed was, a resolution that, come what might, England would be *no party* with France and the Alliance in such war ; a distinction which was clearly explained in his speech on these negotiations in 1823. But this substitution of Lord Grey’s converted the declaration into an assurance of neutrality, which, if it had been given at the commencement of the negotiations, would at once “ have set France at ease,” and would have been tantamount to “ conniving at” the invasion. Whereas, Mr. Canning carefully avoided (as he also stated in this speech,) giving to France any such assurance, till the communication of his despatch (of the 31st of March, 1823) was made to the French Ministers *after the invasion had actually taken place.*

With respect to these mistakes, we will only quote Mr. Canning’s words when in the House of Commons he was represented to have spoken and voted differently from what he had done, and when likewise injurious imputations were founded on such misrepresentation. —“ I am “ far from saying that the ~~error~~ was other than “ unintentional ; but I must remark, that I never “ recollect to have heard any Honourable Gen-

“ tleman fall into an error more fortunate for his  
“ argument.”

But even giving Lord Grey the benefit of these misquotations, and admitting that inasmuch as resistance to the invasion of Spain was not pushed to the extremity of war to that degree it was allowed, it would still be a gross misrepresentation both of Mr. Canning’s policy, and of his speech, to say that he abstained from hostilities, because he “ looked ONLY to some beneficial commercial intercourse with Spanish America.” For, if Lord Grey had examined that speech he would have “ found ” that Mr. Canning “ looked ” to far higher and nobler objects : he “ looked ” to avert the calamity of a general war, and to husband the resources of his Country : he “ looked ” with statesmanlike foresight to the possibility of the period arriving, “ when regard for our national honour, and adherence to our national faith ” might require of Great Britain to put forth her strength, and he “ looked ” to preserve that strength from exhaustion in a “ Quixotick ” enterprize, at once “ romantick in its origin and thankless in its end.” † The moment did come when an attack

\* It is hardly necessary to remark, that Lord Grey’s unblemished character is above the impeachment of intentional misrepresentation. Not the less, however, is it deeply to be deplored, that such untoward errors should have originated in a perusal (unaccountably negligent in such a quarter) of the documents on which he founded his accusations.

† Vide Plymouth Speech, p. 423. vol. vi. of Therry’s valuable collection of Mr. Canning’s Speeches.

was made upon a Nation which we were bound in faith and honour to protect against aggression : then Mr. Canning neither “ looked ” on with indifference, nor shrank from responsibility. The demand for succour was no sooner made than granted ; and, with electrifying rapidity, the “ Standard of England ” was once more “ planted “ on the well-known heights of Lisbon.” So much for the fallacy of the first charge.

The second charge which must next be examined has no greater claims to fairness than the first. In the declaration “ I called the New “ World into existence to redress the balance of “ the Old,” the impartial opticks of Mr. Canning’s accuser could discern nothing but the vain-glorious folly of an “ idle and an empty “ boast.” The method by which he attempted to prove this was by placing a construction upon Mr. Canning’s words, which they will not bear. Lord Grey *affirmed* that “ the Colonies ” were “ called into existence by their own exertions — “ by the example of the United States of America, that they were called and nurtured into “ existence by the united wishes and encouragement of the people of this Country.” But this was confounding two things which are in themselves essentially distinct : the making a Colony independent of the mother Country being an entirely different act from “ calling it “ into ” political “ existence.” The first a

Colony can do for itself — the last requires the agency of some previously established Power. The Colonies conquered for themselves their *de facto* independence, and then they declared that they had done so. It remained for other States to acknowledge or deny the truth of that which the Colonies proclaimed. Great Britain then by acknowledging that truth “ called ” them into legal “ existence,” by which they were brought with reference to this Country within the pale of the law of nations, and obtained the rights and privileges of independent States at a moment when the other European Powers would only consent to treat them as rebels, pirates, and outlaws.

Besides, in all the discussions of the time it was notoriously the practice to employ these words in the precise sense in which Mr. Canning used them. Of this, the note to the Spanish Minister afterwards quoted by Lord Grey afforded an example ; and the Lord Chancellor Eldon at a period previous to their recognition, but subsequent to the establishment of their *de facto* independence, actually refused to interpose in a case which was brought before him, because, said that eminent Judge, “ so far as I know, “ the Columbiaq Government has no *existence* “ whatever.” The validity of this opinion was never questioned, and this *dictum* of one who was no mean expounder of international law, rung in the disappointed ears of our Merchants

who traded with Columbia in a way which taught them but too well what it was to have dealings with a State whose existence was denied by the first legal authority in the land.\* Mr. Canning therefore called them into that “existence” which the Lord Chancellor denied them.

Lord Grey having thus given “his own opinions upon the subject” of this declaration, went on to quote — or rather as has been shown to misquote — the paragraph which contained it. He then proceeded to read an extract from Mr. Canning’s note to the Spanish Minister — from which he plainly insinuated that if Mr. Canning had not made an “idle boast,” he must have been guilty of duplicity towards Spain. As this is a grave insinuation, the words which contain it are given at length.

“ Could any thing,” reiterated Lord Grey, “ be more idle than this empty boast. Let us now see what was the language held by the Right Honourable Gentleman to the Spanish Minister upon this very question. He observes to that Gentleman in his note of the 25th of March, 1825, — ‘ The separation of the Colonies in the New World from Spain is neither our work nor our wish. Events have occurred in which Great Britain took no part, but which caused the separation of Spain from

\* See the Petition of the London Merchants, presented to Parliament. (June 15. 1824.)

" " her Colonies, — a separation which might  
 " " have been prevented had our advice been  
 " " taken in time.' And yet this was the man  
 " who called the New World into *creation*,  
 " and observed that although he had *allowed*  
 " France *quietly* to occupy the Spanish Territo-  
 " ries, it must not be with the possession of  
 " South America. In another part of this des-  
 " patch, and a very long despatch it was, the Right  
 " Honourable Gentleman says ' The under-  
 " signed has it in command from the King to  
 " offer His Majesty's kind offices to bring  
 " about an amicable arrangement between the  
 " King of Spain and those Colonies which have  
 " separated from him.' "

It has been already proved that "calling" the Colonies "into existence" did not mean establishing their independence, but simply acknowledging it after it was established. And if this "very long despatch" had not been too long for Lord Grey to examine, he would have "found" that the conduct of the British Government in the struggle between Spain and her Colonies was proved to have been most strictly neutral — that offers of mediation between the

\* It will be here seen that "creation" is substituted for existence — a substitution which besides making nonsense of the sentence was expressly calculated to produce confusion in the minds of the hearers in a case where the whole dispute turned upon the construction of a word.

belligerents were repeatedly made — that it was not till after Spain herself had opened negotiations with one of her insurgent Colonies on the basis of independence that the British Government expressed an opinion that to attempt to negotiate on any other basis would be hopeless — and that full notice was given to Spain of the intention to recognize the Colonies at the same time that it was distinctly stated that “ such “ a proceeding on the part of a third Power did “ not decide the question of right against the “ Mother Country.”

Where then is there duplicity towards Spain either in the renewal of the offer to mediate with which the note concludes, or in the assertion that “ the separation of the Colonies was “ neither our wish nor our work.” And what is the inconsistency between this assertion to Spain, and the declaration to the House of Commons that the Colonies were “ called” into a new state of “ existence” by the recognition of their independence. Both being positively true they cannot be inconsistent with each other ; although it must be confessed they are so dexterously contrasted by Lord Grey as to be made to appear at first sight to contradict each other.

This however is not the only inconsistency which Lord Grey insinuated — for he argued that if this “ separation was neither our wish “ nor our work,” how absurd was it in Mr.

Canning to say that he “resolved if France had “Spain it should not be Spain with the Indies :” but it is surely obvious that the union against which Mr. Canning was “resolved” was not that of the Colonies with Spain *independent*, but that of the Colonies with Spain *under French dominion*. And although the French Government disclaimed any intention to attempt to reconquer the Colonies, yet the prolongation of the stay of the French army in Spain naturally gave rise to some doubts whether if it should be continued longer than was requisite to quiet the civil discords of the Country, that Army might not, by taking upon itself to guard the internal tranquillity of Spain, have set at liberty all her forces to be employed in the re-subjugation of the Colonies, and thereby have enabled Spain to become again the valuable and dreaded Spain of old, viz. “Spain *with the Indies*.” This was the danger which Mr. Canning “sought” to avert, and the measure he adopted for that purpose, was the calling into political existence the Colonies, by the acknowledgment of their independence, which, by placing them within the pale of nations, and under the protective power of Great Britain, from being as it were nonentities in the balance of power, made them weights in that balance against France, and prevented any interference of a third power against their Independence.

Thus too was the policy of our ancestors vindicated, and the possession of Spain rendered comparatively valueless to its invaders, and harmless to us. It was moreover a compensation to Great Britain by the security it afforded to her commercial intercourse with these Colonies, while it was blow for blow to the feelings and to the pride of France, and a complete and practical dissent from the principles of Holy Alliance, which sanctioned the interference of France in the internal concerns of Spain.

Two points in dispute yet remain, which require to be noticed.

1. Mr. Canning, speaking of the union between France and Spain, had said, "It was "Spain with the Indies that excited the jealousies and alarmed the imaginations of our "ancestors." To which Lord Grey replied, "It was not true that it was the union of the "Indies with Spain which made us so jealous of "the connexion between France and Spain." Positive as is this contradiction, it is nevertheless directly at variance with historical truth.

First, in 1701 the King of England entered into a Treaty with the Emperor of Germany and the States-General, in which it was stipulated — that "the King of England and the "States-General should keep and possess what- "ever lands and cities they could conquer from "the Spaniards in the Indies; and that they

“ should concur in preventing the union of  
 “ *France and Spain under the same Government,*  
 “ *and hinder the French from possessing the Spa-*  
 “ *nish Indies.*”

Second, in 1707, the House of Lords passed a vote that “ no peace would be safe or honourable, which should leave Spain *and the Spanish Indies* in possession of the House of Bourbon.”

2. Lord Grey said Mr. Canning “ took to himself all the credit of having called the Colonies of South America into existence.” But how stands the fact? Why we find “ that the acknowledgment of the independence of South America did not take place until two years after the late occupation of Spain by the French, — the occupation of Spain took place in 1823, and the South American States were not acknowledged by this Country to be independent till 1825.” But if in Lord Grey’s estimation the merits of the question depend upon the time of its occurrence, it must be observed that it does not necessarily follow that because one event took place in 1823, and another in 1825, that therefore they should be two years apart. Nor was it so in the present instance. The occupation of Spain was not completed, and it was very doubtful whether it ever would be completed, until the surrender of Cadiz, of which city the French did not take possession

before the 8d of October, 1828. In the July following the British Cabinet decided on the recognition of Buenos Ayres, and took immediate steps for carrying that decision into effect; and in December of the same year similar steps were taken towards Columbia and Mexico. It appears therefore that instead of "two years" having been allowed to elapse, not nine months passed before the principle was admitted, and not fifteen before the whole transaction was accomplished.

It appears, then, that all these accusations were founded on errors of no ordinary magnitude; but our remarks cannot be concluded without reverting to what fell from Lord Grey on the 5th of August, 1831, to which allusion has been already made. On that occasion he stigmatized the invasion of Spain by France as "a shameful " blot upon our annals," and as "that greater " degradation from whence he believed many of "the difficulties we now encountered had arisen." It may be well, therefore, to draw a brief comparison between the policy recommended by Lord Grey and that adopted by Mr. Canning, not only with respect to that invasion, but with respect to the "bad" and "upprincipled" aggression of Buonaparte.

It was in 1808, when "the bold spirit of " Spain burst forth indignant against the op- "pression of Napoleon," that Mr. Canning

“ recognised without delay the rights of the Spanish Nation, and at once adopted that gallant people into the closest amity with England.” But on that “ stirring, kindling” occasion, so little did Lord Grey allow himself to be carried away by his “ feelings” of enthusiasm in behalf of “ national right and national independence,” that although professing to be animated with the same “ holy zeal to lend assistance against the oppressor,” he yet paused to consider that, when “ nations, not individuals,” were concerned, zeal “ ought to be chastened by reflections of a more cautious and calculating cast;” and he loudly admonished the Government of the day to remember that “ generous magnanimity and high-minded disinterestedness could not and ought not to be considered justifiable motives of political action; because nations could not afford to be chivalrous and romantick.” The abstract prudence of these sentiments cannot be denied, however much Lord Grey’s application of them proved to be unsuited to the exigency of that important crisis; and well might Mr. Canning’s heart rejoice that, in indulging his feelings of sympathy for the Spanish Nation, and sending an army to their succour, he was advancing in the most efficient manner the true interests of his own Country. He was convinced that Napoleon, then in the zenith of his power, could

best be resisted on the soil of Spain, where England would profit more by victory, and be less injured by defeat, than in any other quarter of Europe. How wise was this view of the subject! for the very army, on discussing the policy of sending which Lord Grey uttered these cautious admonitions, was destined to "emerge in "triumph through the Pyrenees," and was mainly instrumental in effecting the downfall of that mighty warrior, who, when that army first arrived in the Peninsula, was master of Europe, and held military occupation of the whole of Spain. Unawed by that colossal power, Lord Grey doubted the expediency of sending that succour; and although he did not suggest any other mode of affording effectual aid, he yet was of opinion that to prevent Napoleon from adding the Peninsula to his already overgrown dominions,—to France, and Italy, and Belgium, and the Rhine,—was not "a "sufficient warrant for embarking England in "a military co-operation" with the Spanish Nation. Such certainly was not Mr. Canning's opinion: let the world judge by the issue, and say which of the two in this case displayed the foresight of a statesman.

In 1823, when France, after a series of defeats, had been confined within her natural limits,—when she had no Napoleon to lead her armies,—when Spain was divided against herself, and

those who joined either half of her population would have had to fight against the other, — when the American Colonies had thrown off the yoke of the Mother Country, — when the question was not merely one of where our efforts could best be directed in a war already begun? but was, whether the blessings of peace should be abandoned and a new war undertaken? then Lord Grey was so alarmed at the danger of the connexion between France and Spain, that, forgetting, or putting aside all these maxims of prudence on which he had laid so much stress in 1810, he urged the Government to rush into hostilities certainly, in part, because he thought our “interests” required us to prevent “the ascendancy of France in the councils of Spain, by “the military occupation of her territory;” but in part, likewise, to “protect and maintain every “principle of international law, and to vindicate “the independence of free nations.” Is not this then that same “chivalry and romance,” in which he had previously declared that “nations” could not “afford” to indulge? for although, unlike Mr. Canning, he considered the evils which would arise from the union of the two, to be such as “we were bound to avert” then, “*quite as much*” as in times past; yet the “degradation” of character which in Lord Grey’s opinion this country endured in 1823 in consequence of the French invasion, must have arisen not from any

unselfish abandonment of our interests, but because we did not stand forth the self-dubbed champions of "national independence," whenever and wherever it was threatened with violation.

It is true, indeed, that even in this instance Lord Grey recommended a maritime war; but surely if the prudential maxims which he propounded in 1810 were applicable for moderating the extent of our warlike assistance, they were much more so when the question was, whether or no peace should be preserved unbroken? For it must not be forgotten that *that* was the question at issue; since Lord Grey himself disclaimed with indignation having recommended the Government to resort to a menace of war, unless they were fully "prepared to put it in practice." And although he expressed his expectations that a menace would have averted the extremity, yet, almost in the same breath, he asserted that Spain "could not and ought not to" "make any changes in her constitution," even of the most "trivial" nature, "because France" "urged them with a threat of war, in case they" "were not effected." He did not, however, shew on what grounds he expected that France would prove less high-minded than Spain, and would abandon to foreign dictation a course of policy in which she deemed her vital interests were essentially involved.

But be that as it may, let posterity decide whether Mr. Canning's policy on this occasion was "a shameful blot upon our annals," by the principles which Lord Grey laid down in 1810; and let them pronounce on its wisdom by the results which have attended it.

Can, indeed, any reasonable man now maintain, that the interests of Great Britain would have been better promoted by stirring up a general war in Europe in 1823, (for had we come into collision with France, she would infallibly have been backed by the Holy Alliance,) than by remaining at peace, in a case where neither national faith nor honour were concerned? The mischief arising from the union of France and Spain, and from that "triumph" "of the monarchical principle," which Lord Grey predicted would end not only in "driving liberty "from the Continent," but in the combined "despots" of Europe "assailing her" in this country, "her last asylum," have all been averted by Mr. Canning's peaceable policy. France no longer occupies Spain; England, the last "asylum" of liberty, has not been assailed by these "despots;" and Europe, at least for eight years, has been spared that war of opinion, which all must contemplate with dismay.

If Lord Grey's policy only prove as eminently successful as Mr. Canning's, and if England has

"to encounter no more difficulties" from his management of our internal and external policy than have arisen to her from this invasion of Spain—if he leave her as respected, as feared, and as admired by Foreign nations, and as prosperous, as contented, and as tranquil at home as Mr. Canning left her, he will indeed be entitled to the overflowing benedictions of his grateful country, and he may look forward with confidence, despising in anticipation all posthumous censure on the wisdom of his Administration. Lord Grey's speech closed the fourth debate.

The fifth discussion originated in a motion of Lord Londonderry's for a return of all appointments of every sort connected with the Foreign Office. The motion was acceded to by Lord Dudley.

The sixth and last debate was begun by a speech by Lord Winchelsea, withdrawing altogether his motion on the State of the Nation, of which he had given notice. Lord Lansdowne and Lord Carlisle respectively made a few observations.

In the course of the Debates on the new Government frequent allusions were made to the uncertain nature of the connexion which existed between the Administration and Lord Lansdowne and his friends, which rendered His Lordship's position somewhat embarrassing. It was therefore determined to put an end to that

state of things, by their immediate junction with the Government.

Accordingly, on the 19th of May, a Council was held at Windsor, at which Lord Lansdowne was introduced to the King on being nominated to a seat in the Cabinet: and Lord Carlisle and Mr. Tierney kissed hands on being appointed severally to the offices of First Commissioner of Woods and Forests, and Master of the Mint.

At the close of the Session Lord Lansdowne succeeded Mr. Sturges Bourne, as Home Secretary; Lord Carlisle, the Duke of Portland, as Privy Seal (His Grace retiring from office, but retaining "his Seat in the Cabinet"); and Mr. Sturges Bourne took Lord Carlisle's place at the Woods and Forests.

The Government remained thus constituted till the time of Mr. Canning's death.

Independently of the Debates on the new Ministry, there were others of importance, which took place before the prorogation.

On the 31st of May, Mr. Hume (who with some few of the Whig party still remained in opposition) brought forward a motion for the repeal of one of the Six Acts. The apparent object of this motion was to embarrass those of the Whigs, who when these acts were introduced by Lord Londonderry, in 1819, had opposed them, and had now joined a Government which was of course inimical to their

repeal. If this was the object, it failed in its effect. Sir James Scarlett satisfactorily vindicated the grounds of his opposition to the motion, and pointed out the essential difference between opposing a bill, the effects of which can only be ascertained by experiment, and voting for the repeal of one of which experience had proved the benefit, or at least the harmlessness, since no one could complain with justice that there had been any check to the spread of knowledge throughout the Country.

Mr. Peel made a speech in answer to Sir James Scarlett, from which Lord Milton said it was difficult to ascertain, whether the object was to exculpate the conduct of the late Lord Londonderry, or under the pretence of doing so, to inculpate that of other individuals. The speech was one calculated to be inconvenient to the Government, and was full of praise of the conduct of that nobleman.

Sir Robert Wilson alluded to the bad *taste* of Mr. Peel's eulogy on Lord Londonderry—and made some severe remarks upon Mr. Hume.

Mr. Canning followed Sir Robert Wilson; and after defending from the charge of inconsistency, those, who, originally adverse to the enactment of the Bill, now opposed its repeal, explained to the House that its clauses were chiefly directed against the circulation of blasphemous publications at a low price, which

were intended to corrupt the lower orders. Mr. Canning contended, that this Country “had “now all the advantages of a free press, purged “from some of that mischief which the law then “under discussion was specially provided to “meet: and he, valuing a free press as highly “as any man, would not consent to poison a “wholesome stream, by the admission of a foul “current, which was now dammed up.”

Mr. Hume made a short reply; and on dividing, the numbers were, for the motion, 10; against it, 120.

On the following day Mr. Canning, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, brought forward the Budget. His speech will be seen to be a mere statement of the views of the Government, for providing for the service of the year. It did not enter into any prospective plans for the future conduct of our finances, nor did it propound any new ones for immediate adoption. It only, in short, proposed a plan of temporary expediency, while it admitted the necessity of looking closely into our difficulties: at the same time the House was asked to sanction the continuance of the existing system, for another year, to give the Government time to consider of the course which they would then recommend for the adoption of Parliament.

The nature of the budget which Mr. Canning had thus to bring forward, was one of the chief

reasons which induced him to accept the office of Chancellor of Exchequer.

It was a budget, which it was fitting should only be proposed to the House by one whose services and talents had a right to expect its confidence ; and it was obvious that the House would only have consented to accede to a temporary arrangement, in the confidence, that he, who asked them to do so, would redeem his pledge of next year bringing forward some well digested system, suited to the financial difficulties of the Country, with as much of retrenchment, as was not absolutely injurious to the publick service.

Mr. Canning concluded by quoting from a speech of Mr. Pitt's in 1792, in which that great man speaks of " Adam Smith as an author " whose writings, from his extensive knowledge " of detail, and depth of philosophical research, " furnished the best solution to every question " connected with the history of commerce."

" Sir," said Mr. Canning, " we hear now-a-days that the application of philosophy to the affairs of trade is an innovation. I, however, am content to go back to the year 1792, and to take the words that I have now quoted into my mouth, words which were then used by Mr. Pitt, which I have treasured up in my mind, and to adopt them as the guide and pole-star of my own policy."

Mr. Hume followed Mr. Canning, and strongly objected to the continuance for another year of the same system. Lord Althorpe did not think it fair in Mr. Hume to force Mr. Canning to take into his immediate consideration the multifarious questions, which a revision of our financial concerns would necessarily entail, and applauded the intended appointment of the Finance Committee.

Sir Henry Parnell, Lord Milton, and Sir John Newport agreed with Lord Althorpe; and Mr. Brougham ended the debate by approving of the plan suggested by Mr. Canning. In the course of his speech he bitterly complained of Mr. Hume, for bringing forward the motion for the repeal of one of the six acts — a motion which he Mr. Brougham had talked of bringing forward, but which, from not thinking the opportunity favourable, he had declined doing.

The general feeling of the House with respect to Mr. Canning's budget seemed to be that, considering the short time that he had held the office of Finance Minister, the late period of the season, and the important arrangements which he had been engaged in settling, no better mode could have been adopted for providing for the exigencies of the year.

On the day on which the Budget was brought forward in the House of Commons, an amendment moved by the Duke of Wellington was

carried in the House of Lords, which eventually proved fatal to the Corn Bill.

Lord Liverpool, before his illness, had given notice of his intention to move on the same day the same resolutions respecting the corn laws, which Mr. Canning was to move. The similar and simultaneous motion was not made in the House of Lords; for on Lord Liverpool's being incapacitated from fulfilling his intentions, not one of his colleagues in that House supplied his place by performing the task which he had undertaken. Lord Bathurst, in moving that the order for summoning the House should be discharged, took the opportunity of saying, that though he should oppose any motion for a general enquiry into the subject, yet that if any limited enquiry were proposed, such, for instance, as one "into the rate at which the home-grower could bring his produce to market, and the rate at which the importer could bring foreign corn into our markets," to such an enquiry he should be ready to agree.

Of this declaration of Lord Bathurst's Lord Lauderdale took advantage, and on the 8th of March moved for a committee to make these limited enquiries; to which motion the Government having acceded, the committee was appointed.

This committee pursued their enquiries while

the bill went through its several stages in the House of Commons.

The measure having been brought forward by Lord Liverpool's Government, Mr. Canning forbore to treat it as a Government or party question, not only on this account, but because the vital importance of its nature, affecting as it did the subsistence of the people, rendered it unfitting that it should be so treated.

The bill passed through its first and second stages in the House of Lords without any opposition, it being understood that its principle was to be debated on the motion for its committal. On the 25th of May, Lord Goderich moved the committal of the Bill, and then explained its objects. Lord Malmesbury moved, as an amendment, "that the bill be committed that day six months;" and after a long debate, in which several Peers took a part, Lord Goderich's motion was carried by a majority of 120 to 63. The majority on this occasion included all the ex-ministers, and the minority was only composed of the professed opponents to any measure, which should lessen the impediments to the importation of corn.

On the 1st of June, the House having resolved itself into a committee, several amendments proposed by different Peers were negatived; but one moved by the Duke of Wellington was adopted,

the effect of which was to place corn, which should be warehoused, upon its importation, upon a different footing from corn which should be taken immediately for use upon its first arrival. By the principle of the bill, corn was to be admitted at all times upon the payment of a duty regulated in amount according to the average price of corn in the home market; but by the Duke of Wellington's amendment, warehoused corn was to be absolutely prohibited, at all times, unless the average price of corn amounted to 66s. per quarter.

The principle of the bill, therefore, being adverse altogether to prohibition, this clause, enacting partial prohibition, was obviously in direct variance with that principle. The Duke, in bringing forward the amendment, announced that it had received Mr. Huskisson's sanction, and this announcement no doubt influenced several votes.

Mr. Huskisson subsequently denied having given his sanction. The mistake arose from the following circumstances: —

When the Duke first contemplated an alteration in the Bill he wrote a letter to Mr. Huskisson enclosing a copy of an amendment, for the purpose of obtaining his approbation.

The object professed to be sought by that amendment was the " preventing the warehousing system from facilitating frauds in the ave-

“rages — and the *inducing some to vote for the Bill who would otherwise have voted against it.*”

To a communication made with so friendly an intent Mr. Huskisson returned an answer, in which he pointed out the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of giving effect to the complicated provisions of the clause proposed by the Duke, in a way which would be at all consistent with its spirit; and, in an unguarded moment, he proceeded to describe another clause, in some small degree similar, as one to which, individually, he had no objection, beyond the fear that “if carried,” (as it altered a duty, and the Bill was a money bill,) “it would prove fatal to it in the House of Commons.” The clause thus suggested by Mr. Huskisson went to prohibit corn, warehoused *before* the passing of the bill, from being entered for home-consumption until the average price had once reached 66s.; that contingency having taken place, warehoused corn was to be “*thenceforward*” on the same footing as foreign imported corn, viz. always admissible on payment of a duty in proportion to the average price: Mr. Huskisson’s object being to save the market, at the commencement of the new regulations, from the sudden rush of the accumulated corn.

The clause proposed by the Duke of Wellington, on the other hand, prohibited warehoused corn from being entered for “home-con-

sumption for ever, except at those times when the average price was 66s. Mr. Huskisson's amendment was to be temporary in its operation ; the Duke of Wellington's was to be perpetual. Notwithstanding, however, this essential and prominent difference between the two, the Duke conceived them to be the same ; and by so describing them to the House, as well as by declaring that he had Mr. Huskisson's sanction to what he proposed, he carried his amendment.

So soon as the proceedings in the House of Lords became known to Mr. Huskisson, he addressed a letter to the Duke of Wellington, pointing out the way in which he had been misrepresented by His Grace. To Mr. Huskisson's letter of disavowal and complaint the Duke answered, that his (the Duke's) " object " in consulting Mr. Huskisson was to obtain his " sanction for what he (the Duke) proposed to " do ; and having obtained, instead of" Mr. Huskisson's "sanction to what" the Duke " pro- " posed, a suggestion of another measure," His Grace " adopted that measure."

" I showed," continued His Grace in his letter to Mr. Huskisson, " your note and the clause " which I had drawn in conformity with your " suggestion to Lord Goderich, who I errone- " ously conceived consented to what I intended " to propose ; and I stated the contents only

“ when he stated his dissent from my proposition, ‘*which was in fact your own.*’ ”

From this letter it appears that after Mr. Huskisson had distinctly assured the Duke, that the clause which His Grace had moved had not his consent, His Grace persisted ~~that~~ it had. Either, therefore, he did not turn to Mr. Huskisson’s letter to see whether he had rightly understood it; or, if he did so turn, he judged it not to be susceptible of a meaning different from that which he had put upon it.

In answer to the Duke’s contradiction, Mr. Huskisson, explained the difference between the clause to which he had said that he had no individual objection, and that which the Duke had carried so clearly, that His Grace acknowledged that he had been mistaken. The Duke being thus convinced of his error, nevertheless did not withdraw an amendment, which he had succeeded in carrying by means of an incorrect representation to the House of Peers: and although he approved of the principle of the Bill, he yet “ thought it his duty” to persist in pressing a clause, in direct opposition to that principle; and although he considered that the Bill was likely to be productive of benefit to the country, he yet did not give up a clause which was sure to be fatal to its enactment. It is evident that the Duke did not look upon it as one, either of paramount necessity, or likely to have

been productive of great advantage to the Country, or else he never would have consented to its omission in the bill introduced in the following year, by the Government, of which he was the head, without substituting for it any provision which could operate to produce the effect, which was the original object for which he had interfered.

The Duke of Wellington being determined to maintain his clause, there were but three courses open to the Government.

The first to try and throw it out on the report.

The second, in case of the failure of the first, to bring in a new bill in the House of Commons, conforming it to the amendment in the Lords.

The third, likewise in case of the failure of the first, to abandon the Bill altogether.

The first of these three was obviously the one which it was right, in the first instance, to try; and the Government made every effort to obtain the reversal of the clause.

From the time, indeed, that the Duke of Wellington announced his resolution to persevere, the whole question assumed a totally different aspect. The cheers by which the result of the first division had been received by the opponents of the Government, showed that they well knew that they had obtained a victory: they were indeed perfectly aware that, if the clause should

be eventually confirmed, it would ensure the rejection of the bill. It was no longer, therefore, fitting for the Government to look on, as indifferent spectators, and not to become parties in the struggle — when it was evident that those who were united in supporting the Duke of Wellington were united by other considerations “besides “the conviction that this measure was either “useful, or honest.” The Ministers, however, had to fight the question under great disadvantages.

Many of the Peers friendly to the Government had so committed themselves against the measure that they felt bound to oppose it; while all those, who cared not about the measure, but were hostile to the Administration, joined themselves to those who were inimical to the Bill.

The consequence of this was, that on the bringing up of the report, when Lord Goderich moved for the rejection of the Duke of Wellington’s clause, his motion was negatived by a majority of eleven, and the clause was consequently retained.

One of the reasons urged by the opponents of the clause was, that it would, as interfering with the privileges of the House of Commons, be necessarily fatal to the Bill: Lord Colchester, therefore, who, from having been speaker of that House, was a great authority on such matters, explained to the Peers the course which

the lower House of Parliament might adopt, if they were desirous of profiting by the more matured deliberations of their Lordships — that course was to reject the Bill, as then sent down and altered, and to introduce another with alterations similar to those suggested by the Peers.

It cannot be denied that this course was open to the Commons, if they approved of the amendment; but if they did not, it could hardly be expected that they would consent to be the originators of a bill, the clauses of which they disapproved, when by so doing they would make themselves responsible for their operation.

That the Government may stand excused for not having brought in a fresh bill, it must be shown that there were real and substantial objections to the Duke of Wellington's amendment.

Of these the most important was the total annihilation of the corn-warehousing system in this Country, which it would inevitably occasion: for what merchant would run the hazard of bonding his corn here, when he would be unable to take it out of bond until the average price reached to a certain height, — the reaching which it would be the interest as well of the future importers of foreign corn as of the home growers to prevent? But supposing the merchant did bond his corn, the moment that he was able to let it out he would of course

enter not a part, but the whole for home-consumption, as letting out a part, if it lowered the price, might have the effect of shutting up the remainder.

The effect therefore of such total emptying of the warehouses would have been to subject the holders of free corn, both British and foreign, to the consequences of a glut. If therefore there were any large quantity in hand, each individual holder of free corn, as soon as he observed the price ascending above the point at which the bonded corn continued prohibited, would, from the dread of such glut, act upon the fear of a fall, and would sell quickly in greater quantities under that fear. The aggregate effect of such individual operations would necessarily be a diminution in the price, which might thus be prevented from rising beyond that, at which the prohibition of bonded corn would determine: no dealer in corn, therefore, under such disadvantageous circumstances, would run the risk of impounding his goods upon a contingency, over which he could have no control; and the inevitable consequence of such a state of things would be that the system of bonding would rapidly decay.

If it did not produce this effect, and warehousing were persevered in by the trade, the worst feature of the other act would be renewed: one great prize, to be contended for

by the conflicting interests, would be established, and every nerve would be strained for effecting those frauds upon the averages, real or imaginary, the prevention of which the agriculturists have deemed essential to their interests. The clause therefore was a direct encouragement to those fraudulent struggles, while "the prevention of frauds in the averages" was its professed object.

If therefore it be wise policy to endeavour as much as possible to make Great Britain the chief emporium of the world, a carrier of its merchandize, it must be now... that the destruction of the corn warehouses would be a severe blow to that policy, to say nothing of the destruction of the value of the property of the owners of the warehouses. But even under this sacrifice the clause would still have been inadequate to the purpose for which it was professedly intended. For if the warehousing of corn facilitated the commission of frauds in the averages, those facilities wou'd have existed in nearly an equal degree, unless the bonding of corn had been also done away with on the opposite shores.

But the clause could *not* have gone such lengths; and the annihilation therefore of that system in this country would have been the signal for its foundation and probably for its prosperity on the neighbouring coasts. A line of warehouses

would assuredly have been established there, always ready to send into the English markets just the same quantity as if they were stationed on English ground. But the transference of our granaries to foreign shores would have exposed this Country to a danger, to which no prudent Statesman would voluntarily consent, of possibly a very pressing and alarming nature. The hoarder of corn is a valuable member of the community. He stores up in times of plenty that which is then not wanted, and is to be the safeguard against famine, in times of scarcity. It has ever been the lot of this Country, at different though uncertain periods, to be afflicted with seasons of great scarcity ; a species of calamity which has always taken us somewhat by surprise, it never having arisen in any material degree from short crops, but always, when excessive, from bad weather, at, or near the time of harvest. The fact of this kind of affliction being thus sudden, makes the establishment of granaries the more important : and in the event of a bad harvest, with hunger pressing on the people, what would be our condition, if those granaries, in such an exigency, were in the hands of foreigners, whose wants might be equal to our own, or who perhaps, from the very circumstance of our distress, might convert themselves into our enemies ?

The Duke of Wellington's sole view in his

amendment, then, was to “ prevent frauds in the “ averages ; ” without admitting that such frauds would be assisted by warehousing, it has been shown that the clause did not in effect prevent warehousing, but only shifted its place and all its advantages from our own shores to those of France and Holland : an evil in itself, but one which would have exposed us to the hazard of a much greater evil ; viz. that of being unable to obtain supplies for the succour of a stinted, and perhaps a starving people.

There is still, however, another reason which operated against the clause with its opponents, viz. that it would have been injurious to the shipping interests, which interests, it is curious enough, the party who were favourable to this clause had taken under their special protection. Experience has shown that when a demand for corn comes suddenly on the country, foreign ships become the chief carriers : and if the more deliberate importations for warehousing are necessarily made into a foreign Country, there is little likelihood that British ships will have much of the trade.

For all these reasons, therefore, Mr. Canning and the Government felt it impossible to bring in a fresh bill to the House of Commons, with such an alteration ; and Lord Goderich declared it to be his intention to take no further charge of the bill.

The bill being thus lost, and the chief labour of the session frustrated, a general feeling of regret was manifested. All parties seemed to agree in the opinion, that in consequence of the failure of this measure, Parliament ought not to separate without providing some remedy against a part at least of the dangers to which the country might be exposed. The fact, moreover, that the Government had been obliged in the preceding November, to have recourse to extraordinary and unconstitutional means to meet the necessities of Ireland, and to call Parliament together at an early and inconvenient season to obtain an indemnity for their acts, made Mr. Canning and his Colleagues unwilling to run the risk of being again compelled to undertake a similar responsibility. If, too, the Government had determined not to 'do any thing, it would have had to combat a hundred crude and wild propositions from other quarters, friends as well as foes; for the uneasiness was so general that every body was devising measures for the occasion.

The Ministers therefore proposed to bring in a bill for allowing the quantity of corn then in bond in this Country, and the small quantity expected from Canada, to come into consumption under the rules and conditions laid down in the bill which had failed.

It was thought that this plan would meet any

difficulty which might arise from high prices, growing out of the then state of things, before the harvest, and which would infallibly have arisen, had an unfavourable state of weather blighted the prospect which then existed of an abundant produce.

No stronger proof of the general opinion as to the necessity of not leaving the question as it stood can be given, than the fact that a proposition to that effect first came from one of the opponents of the old measure.

Mr. Western, the member for Essex, on the 18th of June proposed two resolutions, which were to the intent of repealing that part of the corn act which passed in 1822, by which it had been prevented from coming into operation.

That act, in respect of total prohibition, in certain cases was precisely the same in principle as that of 1815; the only difference between them being, that in the one of 1815, 80s. was the point at which prohibition ceased, whereas in that of 1822 it ceased at 70s.: but this reduction of the prohibitory rate was not to be in force till the average price had *once* more reached 80s., an event which since the passing of the act had never chanced to occur. Mr. Western's design was to make that act operative without waiting for such an event, which it is now clear could not ensue except from a scarcity bordering upon famine.

On Mr. Western's moving his resolutions, Mr. Canning rose to move other resolutions as an amendment; and after briefly alluding to the proceedings in the House of Lords, he went on to show that he could not consent to sanction a measure, which would continue precisely the same system, which had been introduced by the old corn bill, and which, every one admitted, required alteration; neither could he consent that 70s. should be the minimum price at which the people of England were to be relieved from the pressure of the high price of corn by the importation of foreign grain.

" The measure, therefore, that he would propose would be, so much of the measure which had been defeated, as would guard against the evil of any sudden alarm of scarcity, and as had not been objected to by the House of Lords, that all risk might be avoided of engaging the two Houses in a dispute with each other.

Mr. Peel followed Mr. Canning in support of the amendment, and declared upon his honour that he did not believe that the Duke of Wellington " had acted for any purpose of a political nature, or still less for any purposes of party faction; because," said Mr. Peel, " I believe if the noble Duke had intended to make that amendment the means of opposition to the Government, that I should have heard of it previously, and that the first inti-

“ mation which I had of it would not have  
 “ been on the morning of the day after that on  
 “ which it was carried.”

The complaint against the Duke to which Mr. Peel here replied, was not the one which was brought against His Grace. It was never said that in the first instance he was actuated by party spirit; but he was blamed for pertinaciously “ persevering in the course which he had begun,” after his amendment, carried by the aid of misrepresentation, had been caught at, as a useful engine for party purposes.

Mr. Peel then went on to lament that no permanent measure had been introduced; and thought that if, for the sake of passing one, the session were protracted to the end of July, the time would be well consumed in finally disposing of the subject.

Sir John Newport then made some severe allusions to the conduct of the Duke of Wellington, to which Sir Edward Knatchbull rejoined by an argument which did not admit of reply, viz. that the day on which this question was discussed was the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, certainly the most glorious and important victory by land ever achieved by the British arms.

Mr. Baring likewise censured the conduct of the Duke; and his observations were also met by Mr. Peel, (who again rose,) with another men-

tion of that same splendid victory, for which the Duke must ever deserve the gratitude of his Country. But though the glory of that day might be more than sufficient to cover any defects in the future conduct of its Hero, yet he would probably not thank his friends for employing an argument, which, from not defending his conduct on its own merits, created a suspicion that they were conscious that he had been betrayed into errors, which the laurels of Waterloo were required to hide.

Mr. Peel went on to argue, that all Mr. Baring had said of the Duke of Wellington was applicable to Mr. Huskisson, because he (Mr. Huskisson) had "suggested" the amendment.

Mr. Huskisson vindicated himself against the charge of being its author. In so doing he read nearly all the correspondence that had passed with the Duke upon the subject: the substance of it has been already stated.

Mr. Western shortly replied, and Mr. Canning made some few remarks on what had occurred in the debate: he said that he had at heart the interests of the agriculturists, in the bill that had failed; showed the essential difference between protecting duties and prohibition; and in answer to the objection to the temporary nature of the measure which he then proposed, said that he did not introduce a permanent one, because he would not subject it to the fate

which had attended the last in the House of Lords.

He concluded by expressing his hope, that a measure similar to that which had failed would be carried in the course of the following session.

As soon as he had sat down, the House divided: for Mr. Canning's amendment, 238; for Mr. Western's motion, 52.

On the 22d the Bill passed through the Committee, when Sir Edward Knatchbull expressed his doubts whether the late measure could fairly be called Lord Liverpool's. To this Mr. Canning replied, that, in bringing forward the late measure, "he had spoken from Lord Liverpool's own memorandum, as from a "brief; and that though he certainly had introduced one clause, viz. that which empowered the King to stop the importation from any particular Country with which the interests of England made it inconvenient that we should deal, yet that clause had never been objected to."

The bill went through its remaining stages without opposition; and on the 25th Lord Goderich moved its second reading in the House of Lords. Lord Malmesbury objected to the measure. The Duke of Wellington read the two letters left unread by Mr. Huskisson of their correspondence, and disclaimed having

been influenced by party feeling, or faction. The bill was then read and passed without further discussion.

Thus closed the proceedings in either House upon this question, so important in its nature, and so embarrassing in its course to the new Administration.

After the Corn Bill nothing of any consequence took place in the House of Commons.

The last time that Mr. Canning spoke was in answer to an unimportant question from Mr. Wood, the member for Preston. This was on the 29th of June. On the 2d of July Parliament was prorogued with a short speech, in which the deliberations on “the important question of the Corn Laws were recommended to be resumed at an early period of the ensuing Session, with a view to such final arrangement as should satisfy the reasonable wishes, and reconcile the substantial interests of all classes of His Majesty’s subjects.”

Shortly after the prorogation, Mr. Canning, whose health had continued very indifferent, went for change of air to the Duke of Devonshire’s villa at Chiswick. He arrived there on the 20th of July; and from that period until the 3d of August he occupied himself with publick business, occasionally going to Downing Street. On the evening of that day he was attacked with internal inflammation, and, after

very severe suffering, breathed his last on the morning of the 8th.

He was buried in Westminster Abbey, close to Mr. Pitt. The funeral was private, but there were present some hundreds of his friends. It would be difficult to give a more affecting description of the sad scene, than is contained in the following verses, written by a distinguished and highly gifted young nobleman\* : —

“ Canning is dead ! I heard the sound, and cried,  
 ‘ Let funeral splendours wait on him who died ;  
 Let all the land he lived to serve and save  
 Heap gorgeous honour round his patriot grave.’

“ I stood beside his tomb ; no choral strain  
 Pealed through the aisle, above the mourning train ;  
 But purer, holier, seemed to rise above  
 The silent sorrow of a people’s love.

“ No bannered scroll, no trophied car was there ;  
 No gleaming arms, no torches’ murky glare :  
 The plain, and decent homage best defined,  
 The simple tenour of his mighty mind.

“ His hard-earned, self-acquired, enduring fame  
 Needs not what wealth may buy, or birth may claim :  
 His worth, his deeds, no storied urns confine —  
 The page of England’s glory is their shrine.

“ Are others wanting ? Mark the dawn of peace  
 That gilds the struggle of regenerate Greece :  
 On Lisbon’s heights see Britain’s flag unfurled,  
 See freedom bursting o’er an infant World !

Lord Morpeth.

G G 2

“ Ask ye, how some have loved, how all revere ?  
 Survey the Group that bend around his Bier ;  
 Read well the heaving breast, the stifled moan, —  
 Kings, with their kingdoms, could not win that groan.

“ Away ! a scene like this brooks no controul ;  
 Theme of my lyre, and master of my soul,  
 In dreams more wrapt than ever bard has sung,  
 How my young fancy on his accents hung !

“ Others, they tell, more terribly sublime,  
 Have hurled their thunder against fraud and crime ;  
 Could harping seraphs charm our earthly sphere  
 While he but spoke, I had not wished to hear.

“ His was the high, indomitable zeal,  
 The spirit to aspire, the heart to feel ;  
 The mind with every brilliant treasure stored,  
 So vast, so mild, so feared, and so adored.

“ Disease unnerved him, Calumny assailed,  
 His labours paused not, nor his spirit quailed ;  
 In the last tortures of its frail abode,  
 His soul was turned to England and to God.”

The day after the funeral the King wrote to his widow, to offer her a peerage, as a testimony of his high sense of the services of her lamented husband ; and a subscription, which has amounted to several thousands, has been raised, for the purpose of erecting a monument to his name.

## CHAP. XXI.

COMPARISON OF THE DOMESTICK POLICY OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S GOVERNMENT WITH THAT OF MR. CANNING. — TEST ACT. — CATHOLICK QUESTION. — CORN LAWS. — FINANCE. — COMPARISON OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S GOVERNMENT WITH THAT OF MR. CANNING. — TURKEY AND GREECE. — PORTUGAL, AND GENERAL SYSTEM. — COLLISION BETWEEN THE TWO EXTREME PARTIES IN EUROPE.

In the last chapter the history of Mr. Canning's life has been brought to a conclusion. Our task, therefore, would likewise be concluded, were it not that it has been more than once asserted in Parliament by persons of consideration, that the Government of the Duke of Wellington has been guided by Mr. Canning's principles, and has maintained his "system" of Foreign Policy.

On the merits, or the demerits, of the Duke's Administration various opinions may be entertained. All that we intend to affirm is, that His

Grace's principles of Government were not the same as Mr. Canning's ; and that the course of his foreign policy was directly at variance with Mr. Canning's " System."

To establish this distinction is obviously but an act of justice to both parties, lest the one should carry off the praise, or be made responsible for the faults, which the adherents or enemies of the other may be respectively disposed to attribute to his political measures.

In the preceding pages of this work, Mr. Canning's principles of action have been not only stated in his own words, but have been illustrated by examples of their practical application. There is no room, therefore, for any mistake or misrepresentation as to their nature : and further, a pause in the narration has more than once been made, for the purpose of bringing his measures to the test, by enquiring whether they were really in accordance with those fixed principles, which he professed to have laid down as the guide of his political conduct. It is now intended to try the measures of the Duke of Wellington's administration by the same test, in order to show, that, however excellent were the fixed principles of His Grace, they were, with respect to our foreign relations, in no way similar to those which were acted upon by Mr. Canning ; and that, with respect to measures of internal policy, if there has been a much less marked

deviation, and, indeed, in some striking instances, an unexpected conformity, yet in many cases there has occurred a very decided variation.

In a brief review of this nature, it is not necessary to touch upon every measure of the Government, but simply to refer to those which, from their importance, afford the best means of judging of its principles.

In the first session after the Duke of Wellington had become the Premier, the two leading questions were, the Corn Bill and the Test and Corporation Acts. On both these measures, Mr. Peel was the organ of the Government, in the House of Commons. The point, therefore, into which we have to examine, is, whether the principles which guided Mr. P. were the same as those which Mr. Canning had laid down.

Now, with respect to the particular laws affecting Dissenters, Mr. Canning had expressed his opinion strongly against their repeal; 1st, because upon principle he was unwilling to alter laws which produced no practical grievance; 2dly, because he was favourable to a "dominant established church;" 3dly, because he thought the repeal would militate against the settlement of the Catholick Question. Mr. Peel likewise had expressed a decided determination to oppose the measure, "whether in or out of "office,"—and one of the grounds on which he declared his distrust of Mr. Canning's Govern-

ment was his fear, that the repeal of those laws would not be resisted by it. Accordingly, when the motion for going into a Committee was brought forward, on the 27th of February, 1828, by Lord John Russell, Mr. Peel opposed it; but it was nevertheless carried by a majority of 44. A few days after this decision, Mr. Peel came forward, and consented not only to withdraw his opposition, but to give his support, if, into Lord John's bill, a clause were introduced, providing that all individuals appointed to offices, which subjected them to the Sacramental Test, should make and subscribe a declaration solemnly promising not to use their official influence in attempts to subvert, or injure, the Protestant Church. This being conceded, he advocated the repeal, as did the Duke of Wellington in the other House of Parliament.

It appears then that Mr. Peel supported this measure, which Mr. Canning had declared his determination to resist; therefore the Duke of Wellington's Ministry, in this instance, was not guided by Mr. Canning's principles. To this it may be answered, that Mr. Canning and Mr. Peel avowed their determination to resist the abrogation of these laws, before a vote in favour of it had been passed by the House of Commons; and therefore such an expression of the opinion of the House might have induced Mr. Canning to act in the same way as Mr. Peel. But it ap-

pears that Mr. Peel still retained his own opinion as to the inexpediency of the measure. He said "he could no longer think of pressing *his own opinion*\* in the vain hope of altering what undoubtedly appeared to be the fixed opinion of "the House." But such was not the course which Mr. Canning had described as befitting a responsible Minister of the Crown. "If," said Mr. Canning †, "a Minister be not, in his judgement, convinced of the thorough propriety of the course which should be recommended, it becomes his *duty* to waive every other consideration, to persevere in his determination to leave to the Parliament of the Country to adopt such measures as to them may seem expedient, and to place measures which he does not think it right to sanction, in hands more capable of carrying them into execution."

It is impossible, therefore, to contend that the conduct of the Government on this occasion was in conformity, either with the views taken by Mr. Canning of this particular measure, or with the general principles which he considered ought to be the rule of conduct with a responsible Minister of the Crown. It was not a question whether the point at issue was of small importance. The occasion on which Mr. Can-

\* Vide Mr. Peel's Speech, March 19. 1828.

† Vide Mr. Canning's Speech, February 23. 1826.

ning broached this doctrine was one (the issue of Exchequer Bills by the Government) of little moment ; but, not being "convinced" of its propriety, he thought that it would be his duty to resign rather than to give it his sanction.

If, therefore, the annihilation of the supremacy of the Church of England be an evil, and if the example of Ministers of the Crown supporting measures against their own conviction be a bad one — it never can be said that the evil is one which Mr. Canning would have brought about, or the example one which Mr. Canning would have given.

The second measure of the session was the Corn Bill. On this subject we have only to remark, that the Bill brought in was very considerably less favourable to the consumer than that brought in by Mr. Canning, of which the Duke of Wellington's clause had caused the rejection. It nevertheless was founded upon the same principle, viz. the substitution of a graduated scale of duties, instead of absolute prohibition up to a certain point. But Mr. Charles Grant, in bringing it forward, did not hesitate to say, that it was not such as he approved, although it was the best which he could obtain ; and that, since it was a very considerable step towards a better system, it would be so much gained. This bill operated to the greater disadvantage of the consumer, because at the high prices when the

averages are the most fallacious—erring in representing corn to be cheaper than it really is—the duties are more sustained. Dear bread, and bread is the thing really meant, is ever the effect rather of light corn, yielding little flour, than of diminished number of quarters. The *quarter* of corn, therefore, is nominally cheap compared with the price of flour, and the duty is governed by the price of the quarter. If a scale is not to be uniform, its variation ought to be such as is calculated to counteract any natural irregularity of the subject to which it is applied ; but the variation in this Bill acts in aggravation, not in compensation, of the irregularity.

In proportion therefore as this Bill has been less favourable to the importation of corn than the one introduced by Mr. Canning, in that same proportion have those Ministers who restrained Mr. Grant from going to the extent of the former Bill, deviated from Mr. Canning's views and principles.

It was shortly after this question had been disposed of by the Legislature that all the liberal Ministers quitted the Cabinet ; and before the ensuing Session of Parliament nearly all those individuals of note, not in the Cabinet, who had been appointed by Mr. Canning, were successively displaced by the Duke of Wellington.

We next come to the Catholick Question, which it had so long been the object of Mr.

Canning's policy to bring to some conciliatory settlement. This policy had, however, been defeated by the uncompromising opposition of the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel. In vain Mr. Canning pointed out that the inevitable consequences of an obstinate perseverance in resistance to the claims of the Catholicks would lead, sooner or later, to a civil war. His predictions either were disbelieved, or, if not disbelieved, were wholly disregarded ; and when he was nominated by the King to the post of First Minister, the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel both retired from the Cabinet, exclusively on account of the altered position in which this question would be placed ; they could not conscientiously persuade themselves to form part of a Government, which was calculated to advance, in any degree, the ultimate adjustment of so perplexing a subject. The Duke indeed

“ was one of those who thought that the King,  
 “ in forming his Ministry, should select a person  
 “ for its head, of the same general opinions with  
 “ himself upon the great questions of policy,  
 “ whether foreign or domestick.”

From these circumstances it was universally believed, when the King selected the Duke of Wellington to be his First Minister, that it was in the entire confidence that His Grace would continue to further His Majesty's views with respect to the Catholick Question. This belief

received still greater confirmation from the return of Mr. Peel to the office of Home Secretary, with which was now united that of King's Minister in the House of Commons.

For some time after his accession to Office, the language of the Duke seemed to imply the most determined opposition. On the discussions respecting the Test and Corporation Acts, He declared that "there was not in that House" (of Lords) "a person whose feelings and sentiments " after long deliberation were more decided than " his were, with regard to the Roman Catho- " lick Claims; and until he saw a great change in " that question, he certainly should oppose it." Mr. Peel likewise opposed, as strenuously as ever, the motion in favour of the Catholicks brought forward by Sir Francis Burdett; but, notwithstanding, the resolution for a Committee was carried by a majority of six. When, however, this resolution was communicated to the House of Lords, for their Lordships' concurrence, the Duke of Wellington's exertions were more successful than Mr. Peel's, and the resolution was thrown out by a majority of 44.

The Irish Catholicks, who during Mr. Canning's Premiership had been content to wait with patience, in the full confidence that that Minister was sincerely anxious to effect a conciliatory settlement of their claims, no longer maintained the quiet attitude which they had then assumed,

in the belief that the influence of the Government would be exerted in facilitating concessions, by winning over the publick opinion to the conviction that conciliation would contribute to the stability of established institutions, and the general prosperity of the kingdom. Goaded by the resistance of the two leading Ministers of the Crown, they began to despair of success except by means of agitation. Accordingly, the organization of the people throughout the Island was carried to an alarming degree of perfection ; so that, when an opportunity offered for the Catholicks to measure their strength with the Government, they without difficulty prevailed. Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, an individual of high character and talents, Member for the County of Clare, vacated his seat in Parliament by accepting a Cabinet office. Mr. Fitzgerald had always been a most zealous and able advocate of the Catholick cause : he had committed in their eyes but the single fault, of joining an Administration of which the Duke of Wellington was the head. To cause him to be rejected for such an offence, by a County which he had represented, would at once be a signal triumph over the Duke, and the most unequivocal evidence of the power which the Catholicks possessed while kept united by exclusion. But if, in addition to this, the individual chosen should have been a Catholick, and therefore ineligible,

to a seat in the Legislature, the victory would be still more insulting and overwhelming. This victory was, however, obtained — Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald was displaced, and Mr. O'Connell was returned. Moreover, the facility with which the day was won showed, that, if a general election were to take place before the question was settled, the majority of the Irish Members would be Catholicks: in that case, since they would have been excluded from the House of Commons, Ireland would not have had that voice in the Legislature which was assigned to Her by the Act of Union. Such a state of things must have led to a dissolution of that Union, if these Members, who, be it recollect, would have been the legitimate Representatives of the people, had retired to their own Country, and protested against their exclusion from Parliament.

The return of Mr. O'Connell at length opened the eyes of the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel to the imminent danger of their course, whereby, having roused the resentment of the Catholicks into an uncontrollable exertion of power, they hastened very considerably the arrival of the predicted moment, when imperious necessity would demand immediate concession. It is impossible to imagine that such was the effect which the Duke expected would be produced by his acceptance of the post of First Minister, or Mr. Peel by his perseverance in opposition; yet

it was the unquestionable result. Placed therefore in this dilemma (by them unexpected), these two Ministers, rather than any longer endure the frightful responsibility of continued resistance, preferred to encounter the charges, which they well knew must be brought against them, either of having acted with unheard-of insincerity in pretending to hold opinions which they did not conscientiously entertain, or of being blessed with so small a portion of statesmanlike foresight, as to have been regardless, although perpetually warned, of the speedy and infallible consequences of their own proceedings.

It appears that Mr. Peel communicated his resolution to withdraw his opposition to the Duke very shortly after Mr. O'Connell's return; and, at the opening of the Session of Parliament in 1829, it was announced in the Speech from the Throne that the Ministers intended to bring forward concession, as a Government measure. The announcement of this intention was hailed with the loudest cheers by the old friends of emancipation, and it was carried through both Houses of Parliament with little difficulty. Serious difficulties indeed could not be expected after the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel, who had always been the main obstacles, in Mr. Canning's time, to the success of the measure, had ceased to be any obstacles whatever. But the task was in truth easy, for two reasons: — First, the Anti-

Catholick party had been completely disabled by the loss of its leaders, who had transferred all the weight of their own talents, and the influence of the Government, to the Catholick party, which even before the transfer had been all but a match for its opponents. Secondly, the Whigs, who had a fair prospect of obtaining office, if the Government were embarrassed on this question, gave it their most efficient support ; and it must be admitted that the conduct of this party was truly patriotick, since they sacrificed office for the sake of principle. That the converse of this proposition is true of some of the Members of the Duke's Government, cannot be affirmed. But there can be no doubt that one half would be correct — viz. that they sacrificed their principles.

Mr. Peel in his able speeches showed the absolute necessity for the adoption of some “new course.” The state of Ireland was becoming each day more alarming, and therefore it was absolutely necessary to attempt to pacify ; but in 1827 the condition of Ireland, if not equally alarming, was nevertheless sufficiently so to induce Mr. Peel to declare upon his conscience, that, if he thought tranquillity in Ireland would be the consequence of concession, he would no longer oppose it ; but that he could not consent to it, because he sincerely believed that it not only would not have that effect, but would have

a contrary tendency. What then was the difference in the nature of concession in 1827, when it was to have the effect of increasing dissensions, and in 1829, when it was to have the effect of calming them, Mr. Peel left unexplained.

For the great measure of Emancipation, as passed by the Legislature, Mr. Canning must bear a full share of the responsibility which attaches to one of the most active and zealous of its supporters. The point, however, where the Duke of Wellington's Government diverged from Mr. Canning's principles was in not "adopting a middle course between extremes," and preferring to provoke by its opposition a state of things with which, when thus produced, it found itself unable to cope. Had the Duke adhered to his former policy, his administration could not have stood a day after the meeting of Parliament. The measure has been productive of very great advantages, and will yet be productive of far greater, both to Ireland, and the whole British Empire. If it has not already answered to the full extent which Mr. Canning had expected, it must be remembered, that before it was carried, affairs were brought by the Duke of Wellington to that state, which it had been the anxious aim of Mr. Canning to avert.

The immediate disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders, with which concession was accompanied, was also a very different measure

from that which Mr. Littleton proposed in the Session of 1825. His measure was not to have had the “effect” of “trenching on existing pri-“vileges.” The forty-shilling freeholders were to have been left in the enjoyment of the franchises which they then possessed, so long as they were entitled to hold them. They would only have been prohibited from renewing them: by which process some years must have elapsed before they would all have been extinguished. But, by the bill brought in by the Duke of Wellington’s Government, these freeholders were at once disfranchised. If therefore any misery has been occasioned by the operation of this bill, and if any Irish labourers have been suddenly turned out of their homes, because, deprived of their vote, they have become valueless to their landlords, for that lamentable consequence the acts and advice of Mr. Canning make him in no way responsible; for even to Mr. Littleton’s measure he did not give so much as his qualified approbation. The utmost that he said was, that if the Catholick Question could not be passed without it, he should be inclined to look on it with favour.

On the subject of Finance, it must be observed, that from the speech which Mr. Canning made, when bringing forward the Budget in 1827, it was evident that he looked to the introduction of some decisive improvements in

our financial system. It certainly was his intention to revise that system ; and, doubtless, much might be done to improve the revenue and to lighten in a very considerable degree the pressure of the existing taxes. Such unquestionably was Mr. Canning's view of our situation ; and if the Duke of Wellington's Government has gone on in the old beaten path, contenting itself with simply providing for the exigencies of the current year, without looking beyond the moment for which it had to provide, then it cannot be said to have fulfilled Mr. Canning's intentions, and he therefore is in no way responsible for our present financial condition.

With respect to the currency, and our commercial system, there has been no deviation from Mr. Huskisson's and Mr. Canning's policy : for all the consequences of an adherence to it, both those statesmen must be held to be fully responsible. As a proof of its wisdom we appeal with perfect confidence to its results.

It appears, therefore, upon the whole, that, in many of the most important questions of domestic policy, the Duke of Wellington's Government have neither adhered to Mr. Canning's principles, nor carried his intentions into effect ; and that, even with respect to the Catholick Question, there were many features connected with it, calculated to diminish the advantages which Mr. Canning had contemplated, if it had

passed, without doing violence to the feelings of a large portion of the English publick, and without producing a general distrust of the consistency of all publick men.

In turning from this brief consideration of our domestick affairs, we next come to that of the foreign policy of the Duke of Wellington.

This subject must be examined with reference both to the general “system” of the Duke as compared with that of Mr. Canning; and to the particular course pursued towards Portugal, Turkey, and Greece, the affairs of which countries remained in an unsettled state at the period of Mr. Canning’s death.

In consequence of the Portuguese Constitutional Charter having been assailed by the plots of the Apostolical party throughout Europe, and of an expedition having sailed from the shores of Great Britain to protect it against foreign aggression, Portugal had been converted into an arena, in which a sort of a struggle was carried on, between the respective advocates of extreme principles. The measures, therefore, adopted by our Government towards a Country, where absolute power and constitutional freedom were striving for the mastery, were necessarily decisive of the question, whether or not the British Cabinet continued to persevere in maintaining “neutrality between conflicting “principles.”

This was not, however, the case with respect to Greece and Turkey. The treaty of London had proved that, in Mr. Canning's opinion, it was lawful to interfere, for the sake of protecting a whole Christian people from extermination. England therefore took her line, when that treaty was signed; and, the national faith once pledged, each succeeding Government, even if it disapproved the grounds on which the agreement was founded, had no choice but to fulfil its stipulations.

The questions therefore at issue in Eastern Europe related rather to the balance of power than to the balance of principle; and consequently do not, like those of Portugal, bear upon the general system. The policy of the Duke of Wellington's Government in this quarter must consequently be considered, not with reference to the fundamental principle of Mr. Canning's system, but to the particular objects in view, and the means which they respectively employed to attain them.

The particular end, then, for which Mr. Canning laboured, was the prevention of a war between Russia and Turkey: it was for this purpose that he originally consented to co-operate with the former in endeavouring to bring to a termination the contest between the Porte and the Greeks, and that he so repeatedly pointed out to the Turkish Ministers the folly of hazard.

ing, with her powerful neighbour, a conflict in which Great Britain was determined to take no part. By dint of unceasing representations of this nature, Mr. Canning succeeded in persuading the Divan to deprive Russia of all just pretence for attacking Turkey, on grounds of purely Russian complaint. By the Treaty of London he trusted so to operate upon the prudence of the Sultan, as to induce him to consent to such a settlement of his disputes with his Greek subjects, as would likewise remove all pretext for the hostile interference of Russia on behalf of her *co-religionnaires*. That treaty had scarcely been signed when Mr. Canning died ; an event which would under any circumstances have been highly prejudicial to its success, but was particularly so, in consequence of its giving rise in the minds of the Turkish ministers to an expectation — encouraged by, if not mainly originating with, Austria — that the triple alliance formed by the treaty, since its projector was no more, would ere long fall to pieces. The Porte therefore peremptorily refused to listen to the terms proposed by the three Courts through their Ambassadors at Constantinople : the signal defeat at Navarino had no effect in inducing a reconsideration of the refusal ; and the blow not being followed up by any decisive measures, the notion was confirmed that the three Powers would not long

continue to act in concert with each other. The Sultan accordingly became more resolute ; haughtily demanded compensation for his losses at Navarino ; and, not obtaining it, issued, on the 20th of December, 1827, his Hatti Chériff, revoking all the concessions which he had made to Russia by the convention of Ackermann. Whether the battle of Navarino is capable of being justified by the strict rules of international law, is a disputed question which needs not be discussed ; but one thing seems certain, that the instructions to the Admirals, as sanctioned by Mr. Canning, were especially calculated to prevent the occurrence of such a conflict. It is therefore impossible to decide with certainty, how he would have acted after the battle had been fought ; but it seems highly probable, that had he deemed that victory not a violation of the law of nations, he would have taken advantage of the dispositions which such a disaster was calculated to inspire, by urging upon the Porte, with overpowering earnestness, the necessity of an immediate assent to the terms of the treaty : or, had he held the battle to be unjustifiable, he would have insisted upon Russia abstaining, at any rate for a season, from avenging by hostilities the Hatti Chériff provoked by an aggression in which she had participated. Neither of these two courses was adopted ; so that the sole result arising from so gallant an action,

was to cripple the resources of Turkey without in any way hastening the settlement of the quarrel with her revolted subjects. It may, however, be said, and perhaps with truth, that the Duke of Wellington came into office at too late a period to be held responsible for these consequences ; and that when he became Premier he announced his intention to act up to the spirit and letter of the Treaty of London ; but he more than undid all the advantage likely to arise from the avowal of this determination, by making at the very same moment a declaration, expressly calculated to encourage the Turks in defying Russia.

On the 30th of January, 1828, the Duke observed in the House of Lords that “ the Ottoman Porte was the antient Ally of this Country ; that it formed an essential part of the balance of power of Europe ; that the preservation of the Ottoman Porte had been an object not merely to England, but also to the whole of Europe ; and that the change of possession which had taken place in the East of Europe rendered its existence, as an independent and *powerful* State, necessary to the well-being of this Country.” It would have been difficult for any one to employ language better adapted to encourage the Turkish Ministers in pertinaciously resisting the Russian demands, and in incurring all the hazards of the contest. If

the "existence of Turkey as an independent " and 'powerful' state were 'necessary' to the "well-being of this Country," the Sultan could not have expected that the British Government would, without an effort in his behalf, allow things to come to that pass when a Russian General at the head of a victorious army would dictate to him humiliating terms of peace within the walls of the second city of his Empire. But this encouragement to the Porte to persevere in resistance, was not, it seems, considered sufficient by the British Government. Six months afterwards \* it was publicly renewed by Lord Aberdeen, who observed, "that in his opinion " the existence of Turkey as an independent " Power — as a Power of weight and consider- " able influence in the affairs of Europe — was " essential to the preservation of that balance " which it had always been the policy of this " country to preserve. In his opinion, if any " very material diminution of the power of " Turkey took place, it would be felt by all the " great Powers of Europe; and if that were the " case, it would be our duty to preserve it as " entire as possible." This reiteration by the Foreign Secretary of the sentiments of the Prime Minister must have reached Constantinople, at the very moment when the successes of the

Turks, in the first campaign, had given them increased confidence in their own prowess ; and since no British Representative resided at the Porte, these Parliamentary expositions were the only means then open to our Government of conveying advice to the Divan. Such declarations were therefore directly at variance with the line pursued by Mr. Canning.

It is not, however, on this point alone that a glaring discrepancy appears in the modes respectively adopted by the Duke and Mr. Canning in dealing with Eastern affairs. Great praise has been ascribed to His Grace for the resolute manner in which he is said to have resisted all encroachments upon the Turkish dominions in favour of the Greeks, not warranted by the treaty of London ; and yet in the final settlement, he consented not only to limits far more extended than those which he is lauded for having at first proposed, but became actually a party to the creation of Greece into an independent State, and the dismemberment of a large portion of the territory of our “antient Ally,” whose “existence as a powerful state” he considered to be “essential to our well-being.” It may be true, indeed, that the Sultan, when the Russian armies were within three or four days’ march of his Seraglio, consented to acknowledge the complete independence of his former subjects ; but this hard condition would never have

been extorted if the Duke had protected our “antient Ally” to the degree which Mr. Canning would have done, who held that, if war between Russia and the Porte should ensue, in any pacification by which such war might be concluded Russia should be bound to stipulate for the Greeks to the extent of the stipulations proposed by the Protocol, but bound at the same time to stipulate for them in no other manner, and to no greater extent.

If, then, the prevention of a “material diminution of the power of Turkey” was the common object of Mr. Canning and the Duke of Wellington, it must be confessed that they respectively sought to attain it by the employment of very different means. Mr. Canning succeeded, and the Duke failed; it must however be admitted, that the circumstances with which the Duke had to contend, were in a certain degree more difficult to controul. It was undoubtedly an easier task to prevent the issue of such an *Hatti Chériff* as occasioned the war, than to get it recalled after it had been issued. It is however far from improbable that had the Duke’s principles been sufficiently liberal to have enabled him to place upon the machinations of a certain Continental Government, in the case of Greece, a similar salutary restraint to that which Mr. Canning had before imposed in the case of Portugal, the Sultan might have been induced to

avert, by timely concession, the disgrace and ruin with which he has been overwhelmed.

We next come to the affairs of Portugal, which are so intimately blended with the general system, that they cannot be disunited.

And here we would beg the reader to bear in mind the important and essential distinction between foreign and domestick policy. In the latter, almost every measure of an Administration is known to the publick ; in the former, nearly all are necessarily for a time enveloped in mystery. Mr. Canning dissolved the Holy Alliance by the decided language which he held to their diplomatick agents ; and that formidable Union ceased to exist, without the publick being able to perceive the means by which its dissolution was effected. The influence which a British Foreign Minister is enabled to exercise over the destinies of others, is of such magnitude, that upon it, accordingly as it is rightly or wrongly directed, the happiness or the misery of the world may depend. Had Mr. Canning been the enemy of constitutional freedom ; had he wished to subvert Don Pedro's charter ; had he perversely looked upon the Miguelites as the "friends" of England ; twice in the course of six months might he have aimed a fatal blow at that charter, without its being possible that any ill will on his part towards it could have been substantiated against him. Had the messenger who brought

the news from Vienna, that Don Miguel had taken the oath, been delayed at Paris by Mr. Canning for twenty-four hours, under the pretence of charging him with despatches ; or had less celerity and determination been manifested in sending troops to Portugal, Don Pedro's Constitution would, in all probability, have been cast aside, in a shorter time after its arrival, than it eventually was after Mr. Canning's decease. These facts are only mentioned to show, that even if a Foreign Secretary profess to be guided by certain principles, yet if he do not cordially adopt them, he may, without aught being able to be proved against him, give affairs such a turn as shall materially contravene their fair operation. Sound principles are not all that are required ; a *bond fide* inclination to act in accordance with them is of no less essential importance.

Foreign policy is, and must be, a matter of confidence. Political good or evil is not the work of a single day, or the offspring of a single act. The effects of foreign policy are seldom perceived by the publick until some months after the causes which have produced them have been put in operation, and, for the most part, not until the time when any enquiry into these causes is useless, except as affording the opportunity of holding them up to future statesmen, either for an example, or a warning. Since, then,

it is evident that great effects may be produced in foreign affairs, by means, which may never come to the knowledge of the publick, it is essential, in order to discover the real tendency of a course of policy, to ascertain the secret bias of those to whom the direction of it may be intrusted. This can only be done by a close examination of the nature of the known acts, and declarations of its conductors.

When the Duke of Wellington became First Minister, he was known to this Country and to Europe as belonging to the "Continental school." His name was attached to the treaties of Vienna ; and he was universally believed to ~~have been~~ an admirer of Lord Castlereagh, and an opposer of Mr. Canning's liberal measures. On this subject "a contrast" had been "held up" between them, not only in the daily press, but also within the walls of Parliament. It was therefore naturally to be expected that the Duke would not adhere to Mr. Canning's system of " neutrality " "between conflicting principles," but would return to that of Lord Castlereagh. At the formation of the Duke's Government, the publick were mystified by the continuance of Lord Dudley in the post of Foreign Secretary which he had held in Mr. Canning's time, and by the recall of the British Ambassador from Lisbon when Don Miguel declared himself King ; but the veil was to a certain degree withdrawn,

when the Duke gave it to be distinctly understood that he had in no way "pledged himself " to abandon his own principles and opinions \*," and when the Portuguese charter was overthrown. The preservation of that charter during the continuance of Mr. Canning's and Lord Goderich's administrations had been with justice ascribed to its supporters receiving the moral countenance of Great Britain, who in common with the other Governments of Europe recognized Don Pedro as the Legitimate Sovereign of Portugal. Its subversion being coincident with the appointment of the Duke of Wellington as Premier, suspicions arose that the one event contributed to bring about the other. All hope, however, (with those who understood the matter,) of the Duke's perseverance in Mr. Canning's system was destroyed, when His Grace betrayed such extreme eagerness to seize the opportunity of ridding himself of Mr. Huskisson and his friends, and when Lord Dudley was replaced by Lord Aberdeen, whose inclination towards the Holy Alliance was supposed to be not less strong than that of the Premier himself. This inclination was displayed in the very first speech which His Lordship delivered. He described the advocates of absolute power in Portugal, and of the usurper Don Miguel, as the "friends

Vide the Duke of Wellington's Speech, February 12.  
1828.

“ of England ; ” and stigmatized the supporters of the Constitution, by saying \* that there were among them “ *not a few* who were not only “ not the friends of this Country, but who were “ also not friendly to good Government in “ any country.” These expressions were remarked upon at the time, as savouring of arbitrary doctrines ; but it is not a little extraordinary, that in the very same speech in which they were introduced, Lord Aberdeen affirmed that the Government had not deviated from Mr. Canning’s policy. Lord Ellenborough in a previous debate had used language well adapted to blind the world as to its real nature. His Lordship, who then spoke with the authority of a Cabinet Minister, observed, that he had “ never “ met with any man, or heard of any man, who “ attempted to explain what the principles of “ Mr. Canning’s foreign policy were, as contrasted with those of his predecessors ; ” and Lord Aberdeen, following up the same notion, observed, that the “ noble Lord (Holland) had “ talked of the policy of Mr. Canning, and “ hinted that there had been a deviation from “ it. He had heard,” he said, “ the same fear expressed before, but he had never yet been able “ to tell what was meant by it. He should say “ that the general policy of this Country was the

July 17. 1828.

VOL. III.

\* I I

“ same now, as it had been for many years past ; viz. an earnest desire to preserve peace, not only to England, but to the whole world. “ He knew of no change in this policy, which had taken place since.” Undoubtedly the preservation of peace was the *object* of Mr. Canning’s policy ; but it was not in the *object*, but in the *means* employed to secure it, that deviation was imputed. Mr. Canning’s *plan* for preserving peace, was to check the extravagancies of the two extreme parties. But from the praises of the Miguelites and the censure of the Constitutionalists by Lord Aberdeen, it seems evident that the *plan* for the preservation of peace contemplated by himself and the Duke of Wellington, was to favour one extreme party, and to dis- countenance the other. In this, then, consisted the “ change ;” and a more important or decisive change cannot well be imagined. Still it would seem, that Lord Aberdeen, however well he might understand the principles of his own Government, was unconsciously deviating from those of Mr. Canning, and that he neither comprehended their nature, nor was aware that they had ever been in operation ; for, in the same speech in which the denial of deviation is to be found, he remarked, that he “ con- sidered” the assertion, that Mr. Canning had shaken off “ the trammels” of the Holy Alliance,

" as a mere figure of speech, a ' tale of sound  
 " and fury, signifying nothing !! ' "

From the day \* on which this debate took place, till three days before the close of the session of 1829, the foreign policy of the Duke of Wellington was unimpeded by Parliamentary discussion; the attention of the two Houses being almost exclusively engrossed with the settlement of the Catholick question. Those, however, who watched the progress of our relations with Portugal, saw evident symptoms of the anti-liberal bias of the Cabinet. Lord Beresford had been permitted to retain a high place in the Government, at a time when he was accused of writing letters to Lisbon, expressive of an opinion that Don Miguel had a right to the throne, an accusation which was never refuted; the Portuguese refugees, in violation of every principle of international law, had been fired upon by a British commander, in the waters belonging to their own Sovereign; and a special mission had been sent to Don Pedro to recommend him to give his daughter in marriage to Don Miguel, *after* this prince had perjured himself by becoming the Usurper of Her throne. It may be some excuse for this leaning towards Don Miguel, that Lord Aberdeen imagined that the party of His Royal Highness was more inclined towards Bri-

tish connection than that of the Constitutionalists. How completely he was mistaken has been amply illustrated by the treatment which British subjects have experienced at the hands of the usurping Government. But it may be safely asserted, that had the feelings of the two parties in Portugal been in truth such as were supposed, Mr. Canning would never have departed from his general system of dealing out impartial justice to both sides. The notion, however, and its consequences are a very striking comment upon the inveterate attachment of the British Cabinet to arbitrary doctrines ; since, in a case where the principles of Legitimacy and absolute Monarchy were arrayed against each other, Legitimacy was sacrificed, and Absolutism upheld.

From these facts, then, it would be only reasonable to infer that the British Ministers no longer followed Mr. Canning's neutral course ; but the correctness of this inference is placed beyond the reach of doubt by a Parliamentary declaration of Lord Aberdeen, made at a moment when the concession of Catholick emancipation had given an appearance of strength to the Government, which probably deceived the members themselves into a belief of its stability.

It was on the 20th of June, 1829, a few days before the close of the Session, that the Foreign Secretary thus spoke : —

“ The Noble Marquis (Clanricarde) had

" drawn a sort of contrast between the situation  
 " of this Country now and that which he con-  
 " sidered it to have maintained at a former  
 " period, and took it for granted that she had  
 " fallen from her high estate. He utterly denied  
 " the correctness of that position. He believed  
 " that at no former period had this Country ever  
 " enjoyed more of the respect of the Great  
 " Governments of Europe than at the present  
 " moment. There was one class of persons to  
 " whom the British Government might be ob-  
 " noxious. It was probably looked upon with  
 " dislike by the disturbed spirits of Europe, who  
 " longed to be *let slip* to commence the work of  
 " destruction; but by the Governments of Eu-  
 " rope, by the friends of peace, national improve-  
 " ment, and the preservation of order throughout  
 " the world, the British Government was looked  
 " up to at the present moment with greater con-  
 " fidence than ever."

How different a system of policy is here re-  
 vealed to that which Mr. Canning described in  
 his speech on sending troops to Portugal! The  
 British Foreign Secretary no longer professed to  
 maintain a "position of neutrality between con-  
 " flicting principles," and to act the part of  
 " Umpire" between the professors "of violent  
 " and exaggerated doctrines on both sides;" but  
 he had contrived (and a matter of contrivance it  
 evidently must have been) to make Great Britain

the object of "dislike" to the one extreme, viz. the popular party; and "to be looked upon "with greater confidence than ever" by the other extreme, viz. "the great Governments of Europe."

His Lordship doth not deny, as he had done the year before, that the Government had deviated from Mr. Canning's policy, a knowledge of the true nature of which he appears to have subsequently acquired; for, as if distinctly to shew that these observations were meant to have reference to that policy, Lord Aberdeen makes use of the very peculiar phrase, "let slip," which Mr. Canning had employed in that celebrated speech. Does it not, then, seem more than probable that these remarks were made for the purpose of ascertaining how this Nation would bear a return to the foreign policy of Lord Castlereagh? and can it be doubted, that if such were the language held in Parliament, sentiments of even a less liberal description were expressed to the diplomatick agents of the "great Governments of Europe," who placed "greater confidence than ever" in our own?

Judging, therefore, of the foreign policy of the Duke of Wellington's Government by what was manifested of its tendency with respect to Portugal, and of the exposition made of it in Parliament by the Foreign Secretary, it is impossible not to conclude that, upon principle, it

sided with the ultra-monarchical extreme. That point once established, it follows that the partizans of that extreme must have acquired "greater confidence than ever" in their own strength. The consequence of such confidence Mr. Canning had always anticipated would be, to incite that one of the two parties which entertained overweening notions of its own vigour, to such extraordinary efforts for obtaining an increase of power as would provoke violent resistance, and consequently collision. Collision certainly has taken place, and that in about "two "years" after the system of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen had come into full operation. The question then must be, Is the one the consequence of the other? That Charles X., had he not given his people cause to mistrust his sincerity, by selecting a ministry of the character of M. de Polignac's, and had he not made an unjustifiable and outrageous attack upon the liberties of his people, would have been now seated on the throne of France, with a reasonable prospect of transmitting it to his descendants, is a proposition which few, if any, will deny. Would that appointment and subsequent attack then have been made, if the British Government had not thrown the weight of its influence into the ultra-monarchical scale? To this it must be answered, that it is difficult for those individuals to believe that it ever would,

who have remarked the following train of singular coincidences.

When Mr. Canning was at Paris in the autumn of 1826, Charles X., in speaking of the attempts which were made to impute to himself, and his Government, a design to do away the provisions of the Charter, and to bring things back in France to the state in which they were before 1789, observed, that no such design was entertained by his confidential servants ; that for himself he had weighed the matter well in 1814, and had come to the conclusion, that the restored family had nothing to do but to act frankly and cordially upon the institutions which it might be found necessary to sanction. For himself he did act sincerely in this view. Such were the wise notions which the French Monarch professed to entertain of his own position, when Mr. Canning was in the plenitude of his power ; and that His Majesty was then sincere, his conduct on a subsequent occasion affords very convincing evidence.

When the Chambers were dissolved by M. de Villèle towards the close of 1827, the symptoms of the state of publick feeling as displayed by the return of liberal deputies were of the most decided character ; and it became clear that M. de Villèle, moderate ultra as he was, would no longer be supported by the legislature. Charles X. then determined to yield to the

wishes of his people ; and, without even waiting for the meeting of the Chambers, he, of his own free will, dismissed M. de Villèle and his colleagues, and appointed the liberal Ministry of M. de Martignac in their places. When His Most Christian Majesty took this step, Mr. Canning indeed was no more ; but the Government which he had constructed still held together, and were doing the utmost to maintain his principles.

For upwards of a year Charles X. treated his new Ministers with cordiality ; but in the spring of 1829 he is reported to have behaved towards some of them in publick with marked incivility. The King of France did not thus act, until he had good grounds for reckoning that the foreign pol' cy of the British Cabinet would not be altered, in consequence of any change in its composition : for this line of conduct exactly coincides in point of time with that appearance of stability which the Government of the Duke of Wellington assumed in consequence of his conduct on the Catholick Question.

On the 8th of August of the same year, the ordonnance was issued which dismissed M. de Martignac and his colleagues, and appointed in their room the Prince de Polignac and his friends. Its publication took place just six weeks after Lord Aberdeen had boasted of the “ dis-“ like ” entertained by one party towards the

British Government, and of the other reposing in it "greater confidence than ever." Until that exposition had been made, there was no certainty that the British Parliament would tolerate such a system. Between the two events no longer a period elapsed than was requisite for the transmission of Lord Aberdeen's speech to Paris, the order to the Prince to repair thither from London, His Excellency's journey, and the completion of the necessary arrangements.

In this fatal appointment originated all the mischiefs which subsequently ensued. The King was too deeply committed by it to be able safely to recede: for it excited such strong suspicions of his intentions to abrogate the Charter, that he never could have regained the confidence of his people. The sentiments of M. de Polignac were no secret. He was well known to belong to the "Congregation," and the "Congregation and the Jesuits" were believed to be plotting the destruction of the charter. A re-action, whenever it came, was certain to be of so violent a character as to transfer all the real power of the State from one extreme to the other; in which case the Royal prerogatives would have been curtailed in a manner, which would have made the change little different from a revolution.

The Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel have both denied having in any way, directly or indirectly, interfered in recommending the no-

mination of the Prince; but can it be believed that that nomination would have taken place if Charles X. had not reckoned on at least the moral support of the British Government? If the sentiments of our Ministers had no influence over this unfortunate Monarch, is it not an unaccountable coincidence that his opinions and actions should vary so as to be exactly in unison with theirs? That M. de Polignac did not contemplate, when he accepted the post of First Minister, having recourse to the measures of extreme violence, which have brought about his own ruin and that of his Sovereign, is more than probable, as well as that he was hurried into them in blind deference to commands, which he thought it would be the basest of crimes to disobey; but it is much to be feared that the infatuated Monarch would never have ventured on the deed, which has terminated in his exile, if he had not looked up to the British Government "with greater confidence than ever."

Not that we would insinuate, that either the Duke of Wellington or Lord Aberdeen had any notion of the intention to issue the "Ordonnances," or that, if they had, they would not have done their utmost to prevent so unwise a measure; but the last publick act of the Duke, the speech from the throne, proves a perseverance in that same anti-liberal course which

Lord Aberdeen so accurately described, but a few weeks before Prince Polignac's appointment.

The King of France could not have been ignorant of this perseverance ; and it must have emboldened him to make that unjust attack upon the publick liberties, which maddened into armed resistance an unwilling people, and at once brought the advocates of unlimited democracy and of absolute monarchy into collision with each other.

Is not this, then, the same appalling danger which impended in 1822, when Mr. Canning assumed the direction of our foreign affairs ? Is not this the same danger that he succeeded in averting while he lived, and indicated a sure mode for his successors to prevent its recurrence ? And is not this the evil which he fore-saw would be realized, when he observed that “ two years of the policy of the Duke of Wellington would undo all that he had done ? ”

We confess that we are amongst those, who think that it would have been for the happiness of the civilized world, if Charles X. had remained upon his throne, and had secured the affections of his subjects, by a due regard to their feelings and wishes. By degrees the French people would have gained all the liberty and privileges which they could reasonably have desired ; and that without passing through the dreadful ordeal of bloodshed and revolution.

The conflict has not been confined to Paris : the social order of other Continental States has been shaken by internal convulsion ; and the vibrations of the struggle, which has agitated France, have been felt more or less sensibly in almost every country in Europe. The ignorance of human nature which marked the proceedings of the Congress at Vienna in 1815 must now be manifest to the most prejudiced eyes ; for it seems no longer possible to maintain the territorial distribution of Europe there arranged, simply because it was based on erroneous principles of arbitrary policy. As yet, however, foreign war has been averted ; for the well-being of mankind it is to be hoped that the world may be spared so fearful a calamity. Much will depend on the policy pursued by this country. But there is every reason to hope, since those who are now intrusted with its direction will no longer be viewed with distrust by the European publick, that feelings of confidence will again revive towards the British Government, whose members are known to be sincere friends to the just and regulated liberties of the people. The liberal Government of France can have nothing to fear from the British Cabinet ; and the French Nation must be too conscious of what will contribute to its own prosperity to desire to see its resources wasted in an unprofitable con-

flict, when, by an enlarged commercial intercourse, the two nations may contribute to augment, in an unexampled degree, their mutual greatness and advancement.

Great Britain herself has not wholly escaped from feeling the effects of these convulsions, in the tumultuous assemblages of the labouring poor. The Government which has succeeded that of the Duke of Wellington can, however, suppress with a strong arm the lawless outrages of these misguided people, without being exposed to the suspicion of being unfriendly to liberty, or unmindful of the comforts of the lower orders.

The Premier has pledged himself to endeavour to remove the causes of that state of mind, which in some cases has unfortunately made the peasant, who ought to be the 'defender, the assailant of his employer.

Perhaps no single measure that could be devised would be so effectual a remedy for these evils, as a relaxation of the restrictions on the corn trade.

It was Mr. Canning's opinion, after the bill which was prepared by Lord Liverpool had been lost, that when a new corn bill should be introduced in the succeeding session, it would be advisable so to frame it as to place still fewer obstacles to importation than existed in the one, which had been rejected.

Such a Bill, so far from being disadvantageous to the landed interests, would have stimulated the industry of the country, and contributed to improve the condition of labourer, farmer, and landlord, as well as of the manufacturer: for it is capable of demonstration that the corn laws, as at present framed, operate even more injuriously to the agricultural than to the other great interests of the Country. If, then, Mr. Canning contemplated the introduction of a bill, giving increased facilities to importation, it was from a sincere conviction that it would be found beneficial to all parties; and not from any notion (such as was imputed to him) that he could befriend the people, at the expense of the aristocracy. Had he not been their well-wisher, he could not have been the friend of the people; the true interests of both being indissolubly united: and if he occasionally took a different view of what would be advantageous to the aristocracy from that of some individuals belonging to their class, it was because those few entertained erroneous notions respecting the true sources of their welfare.

The present Government are pledged to Reform. Mr. Canning's last declaration on the subject was, that he would "oppose it to the "end of his life;" but it should be remembered that he thus spoke at a time, when "all that he "had done" had not "been undone," and that

he had a well-grounded confidence that, so long as he lived, he should be able to prevent the mischief.

In the present altered state of things, who can say that, were he now living, he would inflexibly resist a guarded and limited concession ?

To enable this Country to pass uninjured through the existing crisis, much may be done by individual exertion, and still more by wise and temperate legislation. But in scrutinizing the wisdom of political measures, let us not be deluded with the vain belief, that human foresight and prudence are alone sufficient to ensure the prosperity of a Nation : the ablest administration of the wisest laws is impotent to save, without the favour of the Almighty. Christianity, in its purest form, has long flourished in this land ; and it is worthy of grateful remembrance, that, during the late war, the soil of Great Britain was preserved from those calamities, which afflicted more or less severely every Continental State. Ought not the contemplation, then, of this peculiar mercy to confirm our adherence to that faith, which is, at once, of the highest importance to individuals, the surest promoter of domestick tranquillity, and the best safeguard for the preservation of those established institutions, which, whatever may be their defects, have, under the protection of God, secured for this country a larger portion of happiness than

has ever fallen to the lot of any civilized people ? Of the superior excellence of the British Constitution Mr. Canning, indeed, was so fully convinced, that to maintain, to strengthen, and to improve it, he zealously devoted his life.

THE END.

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